**THE STORMS OF THE 70s** **GEOFFREY BARRACLOUGH**

# THE NATION

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# LETTERS

## hippie as 'nigger'

*North Hollywood, Calif.*

Dear Sirs: Two instances of multiple murder have shared the front pages in the last month. One is the slaughter of innocents at Song My in Vietnam, which may very well accelerate public feeling against a mindless and vicious war. The other, the multiple Tate killings in Los Angeles, equally gruesome, which may have an opposite effect domestically. . . .

Hippie equals Drugs equals Murder. All because a long-haired psycho hypnotized a group of other psychos, and they acted out their sickness, their peculiar hostilities.

So the legitimacies of the youth revolt, grounded in the inequities of our society, is somehow transmogrified—by public ignorance and fear—into something sinister. No such generalizations were made by the press, or anybody, when Speck butchered seven nurses in Chicago. But the Tate tragedy has made of the hippie the "new nigger," menacing and frightening. An already existing bigotry has been sustained. . . .

*John Bright*

## what Russell meant

*Koch, Mo.*

Dear Sirs: Ronald V. Sampson's review of *The Autobiography of Bertrand Russell* [*The Nation*, Nov. 10] . . . summarizes Russell's social philosophy and concludes that it is "shot full of contradiction." Anyone who accuses that great logician had better be prepared to defend his conclusions. . . . There are two definite inaccuracies. . . . Russell was never an *unqualified* pacifist. Russell never advocated preventive war against Russia in order to protect U. S. monopoly of nuclear weapons. . . .

*Albert Kaplan, M.D.*

*Bristol, England*

Dear Sirs: I am very sorry if I unintentionally distorted Lord Russell's meaning. If I may quote the relevant passages, the reader can judge for himself. "They [the Russians] exploded their first bomb in August 1949, and it was evident that they would do all in their power to make themselves the equals of the United States in destructive—or, politely, defensive—power. The arms race became inevitable unless drastic measures were taken to avoid it. That is why, in late 1948, I suggested that the remedy might be the threat of immediate war by the United States on Russia for the purpose of forcing nuclear disarmament upon her. . . . My chief defense of the view I held in 1948 was that I thought Russia very likely to yield to the demands of the West."

If Russia had been forced into nuclear disarmament, there would then have been an American monopoly of nuclear weapons. Taken out of context my sentence might mislead someone who knew nothing of Russia to suppose his purpose was to establish American world hegemony. It never occurred to me that anyone might infer any such absurd purpose. I stated that Russell has been "consistently pursuant of the cause of peace through a long life."

On pacifism, may I again let Russell speak in his own words to clear up any possible misunderstanding. Speaking of his decision to "support what was necessary for victory in the Second War," he wrote: "This was the last stage in the slow abandonment of many of the beliefs that had come to me in the moment of 'conversion' in 1901. I had never been a complete adherent of the doctrine of non-resistance; I had always recognised the necessity of the police and the criminal law, and even during the First War I had maintained publicly that

*(Continued on page 20)*

# EDITORIALS

## The Sixties

Robert Lipsyte, that most perceptive sociologist who masquerades as a sports columnist for *The New York Times*, says of the "Super Sixties" that "we won't know what really happened until the films are developed." That, of course, is true, but the end of a decade confronts editorial writers with an irresistible temptation to comment on the decade that has come to an end, if not to speculate on the one that lies ahead.

The sixties opened with a zest and fervor and hopefulness that were not present in 1950. In part, the eagerness was a form of whistling past the graveyard of fear, boredom and dreariness which the fifties had bequeathed. A most attractive young President personified exactly the qualities people yearned for—hope, enthusiasm, confidence—and he succeeded brilliantly in communicating these qualities. Above all, he brought a new style, of politics, of leadership, to the White House.

The difficulty was that the "newness" was an illusion, a matter of appearances, not of substance. There was really no sharp break with cold-war policies, which even then were in disarray. On the domestic front the fog of fear had lifted and a new generation, responding to President Kennedy's personal qualities, began to reassert an interest in politics. "The Careful Young Men" of the fifties began to be succeeded by the activists and swingers of the sixties. But again, there was no sharp break with the "internal security" programs of the preceding period. The Peace Corps was a fine idea, but handicapped by its cold-war setting. The new President had been elected by a narrow margin and did not want to spend his political capital on civil rights and race relations. It was clearly his intention not to make significant innovations in this field until his second term. So despite the fact that the need was urgent—and evident—nothing much was done.

Not only were cold-war policies pursued but the military emphasis was even more pronounced (note an exception for the test-ban negotiations), as in the disastrous Bay of Pigs invasion which, though planned under Eisenhower, placed a cloud on the Kennedy administration that it never fully dispelled. Then, too, the President acquiesced in the counter-insurgency notions being hawked by General Taylor and others, and began to upgrade the American commitment in Vietnam (which also dated from the Eisenhower administration). Military spending soared; new weapons systems were initiated. In a daring move, goaded by Soviet space technology, the President committed the country to placing a man on the moon by the end of the decade. That objective was realized. It was a brilliant achievement and even more brilliant public relations, but the price was high in terms of neglected domestic programs.



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President Kennedy bombarded Congress with messages and proposals on domestic problems, but his follow-up was not notably energetic. Despite repeated warnings, ecological issues were not sensed as acute, and "hard-core" poverty and the problems of our cities were not given top priority. Then the President was assassinated and, in the traumatic aftermath, his successor was able to move rapidly —perhaps too rapidly—on a number of domestic issues, notably civil rights. But the promise of these measures—the war against poverty and the others —was largely negated by his fateful decision to escalate the war in Vietnam. Out of the resulting frustration, three significant protest groups emerged: the young, the blacks and a greatly enlarged peace constituency. These groups are, perhaps, the most important legacy of the sixties to the seventies, but none of them was officially encouraged. They are products of our failures, not of our successes.

The decade closed with Richard M. Nixon in the White House, where it may be doubted he would be if failures had not eclipsed the promise of the sixties. Neither President Kennedy nor President Johnson can be held personally responsible. There was too much "super" in the mood of the sixties and not enough sense. The promise was an illusion born of wishful thinking; the failure of leadership reflected a general inability to sense what needed to be done and in what order. Throughout the decade we suffered from a mistaken notion of where we really were in the real world. For example, we thought we were "affluent"; we were more nearly bankrupt, at least in the social sector. We had been living for years on illusions; fortunately, we seem to be entering the seventies in a more realistic frame of mind. But of all this no one can be sure just yet, for as Mr. Lipsyte says, we won't really know what happened in the Super Sixties until the films are developed. He means history, and that always takes some time.

## Science and Society

The week between Christmas and New Year's is traditionally a time of scientific and scholarly meetings, at which in past years the topics the savants chose to discuss were safely bounded by their specialties. But times have changed. The shift could be noted in 1968, and it was accelerated in 1969. Technical papers still dominated, but at major conventions, such as the one held in Boston by the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the relation of science to society, and the social responsibilities of scientists (and engineers) generated the most excitement. Many of the sessions, in the words of one reporter, "reflected heightened concern for the impact of science and technology on society."

Another difference between the recent conventions and those of past years was an increasingly strident note of rebellion against the scientific "establishment" of traditionalist professors, and those who



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favored the close association of the armed services and the universities. Students who attended the sessions were not easily satisfied, and a demonstration was mounted at an AAAS session on disarmament of which the chairman, Prof. George Kistiakowsky of Harvard, and at least two of the panelists, Drs. Jerome B. Wiesner and Bernard Feld, have come to be regarded as peaceniks. The students carried placards, one of which read, "Who Makes MIRV? M.I.T.—Home of Feld, Wiesner."

Another important session at the Boston meeting was on "Academic Research and the Military." The debate on this question reflected the rise in anti-war sentiment among both professors and students. There is no denying that since World War II an enormous amount of valuable basic research has been financed by the Defense Department. Only a minor proportion has had any current military application, nor was the bulk of the work oriented toward future military usefulness. Much of it was disinterested scientific inquiry. The services' contributions filled a real need and were eagerly accepted by the scientific community. Moreover, since the Army, Navy and Air Force were all involved, there was considerable diversity in the support that was offered, and a worthy project that did not attract interest in one quarter might find it in another.

The annual contribution made by Defense to university-based research and development (development is necessarily closer to military applications) has averaged about $270 million, according to a current estimate. But even in its most enlightened aspects, is close liaison between the military and the universities a desirable state of affairs? Prof. Noam Chomsky of M.I.T. denounced it before the AAAS audience as a "symptom of the ongoing, and perhaps irreversible, militarization of society." It tends to make the military more respectable and the universities less so. Scientists are less likely to see the moral failings in government policy when their own activities are generously financed by the agencies that carry out that policy—if necessary, with napalm, high explosives, and whatever means are deemed necessary for "victory."

Dr. Charles W. Shilling of George Washington University differed with Dr. Chomsky. "To be successful, universities require freedom," Dr. Shilling argued. "To ensure freedom, national defense requires the advanced technology often pioneered by universities." Dr. Shilling did not explain how the American venture in Vietnam contributed to the freedom of American universities or the harmonious relations within the universities that are held to be the *sine qua non* of creative thought. The young people in the audience did not receive Dr. Shilling's views with enthusiasm.

The space program also felt the attack, and not only from young scientists. Among those critical of huge expenditures for space stations, Mars landings and lunar bases were Dr. Walter Orr Roberts, AAAS president, and two scientific advisers to President Nixon and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration itself. This uprising within NASA came from Drs. Lewis M. Branscomb, director of the National Bureau of Standards, and Gordon J. F. MacDonald, vice chancellor of the University of California, at Santa Barbara. Dr. MacDonald denounced the projected man-on-Mars program (its cost is variously estimated at between $25 billion and $100 billion) as "utmost folly." But the argument has much wider reference. MacDonald wants the needs of science to be discussed "outside of the NASA-industrial-science complex." At present these interests set the goals, urge them on the President, lobby for them in Congress, and influence the appointment of scientists to advisory committees that will support the goals already established. From the standpoint of society and science itself, the priorities are distorted at the outset and revisions are either impossible or can be achieved only against built-in resistance.

The case against the existing system was summed up by Allen S. Weinrub, a 26-year-old graduate student in applied physics at Harvard. "The misuse of science and technology," he said, "takes the form of militarism, economic exploitation and imperialism, and psychological domination." It remains to be seen how the next AAAS convention will respond to these charges, and what action the AAAS leaders will take in the meantime.

## Lyndon's Hessians

American school children's history books have customarily execrated the government of George III because it hired German mercenaries to fight for Great Britain in the American Revolution. Little attention was attracted by generally similar arrangements initiated by Lyndon B. Johnson and Dean Rusk in Vietnam until some four years after the event, when Senators Symington and Fulbright disclosed what we paid and what we got—which was little enough.

We were already accumulating more than 500,000 American and about a million South Vietnamese troops, but the Johnson administration felt that we needed "allies" for public relations purposes. The requisite arrangements were made mainly in 1965 and 1966. Dispatching a battalion (about 1,500 men) of Philippine army engineers to Vietnam, President Ferdinand Marcos declared, "There is no price too high to pay for freedom." He must have been speaking on behalf of the United States, which was paying his government about $38 million for the hire of the battalion. It built some roads and was speedily recalled as soon as Marcos had got himself re-elected, with the aid of "gifts" to all the village headmen in the islands.

The Thai satraps did better. They got something like $1 billion in military and economic aid in exchange for 12,000 combat troops, whose delivery in the swamps east of Saigon began in 1967. In two years they lost about 200 men killed and claim to



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have killed more than a thousand Vietcong, mainly, one may surmise, by watching American aircraft in action. An American officer attached to the Thai forces comments that they have not been "fantastically aggressive." Other sources report that, learning the ways of war from forehanded American troops, they have been diligent in reselling to black marketeers goods purchased at post exchanges.

*Newsweek* (December 15) gives some details of the deal concluded in early 1966 between the then U.S. Ambassador to South Korea, Winthrop G. Brown, and South Korea's astute foreign minister, Lee Tong Won. "It was a long shopping list," one American diplomat commented, "and believe me, it was exorbitant." Since American aid was already going to South Korea in vast amounts, it is difficult to say what the Korean contribution of manpower for Vietnam actually cost. However, an American source gives an idea: "These negotiations must have shocked the Koreans when they found out how much we were willing to pay." Embassy staff members kept asking the Ambassador, "Why are we doing this?" The answer was, "Lyndon wants the troops." He got them—some 48,500.

The 7,600 Australians and 550 New Zealanders, whose governments pay for their support, can properly be called allies. The others were Lyndon's Asian Hessians. Today they work for Richard Nixon.

## Professor Rusk

Polarization is a word that has become current during the present Administration, but Dean Rusk, who exerted his sphinxlike influence on the two previous administrations, must understand what it means. Finding himself out of work when the guard changed in 1968, and only temporarily sustained by a grant from the Rockefeller Foundation, Mr. Rusk thought that teaching might be a pursuit congenial to his talents and dignity. He scarcely aspired to a faculty post in the North (after all, W. W. Rostow couldn't get back into M.I.T. and is now gracing the University of Texas), but Mr. Rusk is a Georgia boy and it seemed to him likely that the university there would welcome his services.

It did not turn out to be so. Mr. Rusk has got his job as professor of international law at the University of Georgia, but only after an uproar that rocked the state and produced expressions of scorn and hostility from the local political bosses that must have caused the ex-Secretary of State more pain than he could possibly be expected to admit. So deep is the split today in national attitudes that Dean Rusk, who is rejected in the North as phobic crusader against communism, is opposed by Governor Maddox of his native state as being a cog in the "international Communist conspiracy."

Roy V. Harris, a member of the board of regents and former speaker of the Georgia House, has said with reference to Mr. Rusk: "We don't want the university to be made a haven for broken-down politicians"; but Harris is also a high-ranking member of the White Citizens Councils of America and head of the Wallaceite American Independent Party in Georgia, and his real objection to Mr. Rusk is that his daughter married a Negro. That, plus Mr. Rusk's alleged "no-win" policy in Vietnam, is why his welcome home to Georgia hardly measures up to the standards of traditional Southern hospitality.

Still, Mr. Rusk has his post (at a reported salary of $45,000 a year) and we wish him well in his new career. We never pretended to admire him as Secretary of State, but he could not have held that position for so long without learning a good deal about international law, so what he lacks in theory from not being a lawyer, he may well make up for in the practice he got during those most perilous years in Washington. It is true that while in office some of his interpretations of international law seemed to us odd to the point of perversity, but as a teacher he will now have an opportunity to place those opinions in perspective. We don't guarantee that he will be a stimulating member of the Georgia faculty, but it is possible. His experience is great; his students can give themselves the pleasure of testing his wisdom.

And if it should prove, as we suspect it will, that Professor Rusk is neither as reactionary as his Northern contemporaries believe him to be, nor as subversive as his fellow Georgians denounce him for being, he may do something to ease the polarization so willfully promoted by Messrs. Nixon and Agnew. It may be the best chance Dean Rusk has ever had since he left his father's Cherokee County farm.

## Controversial

In a friendly article on Dr. Stephen H. Fritchman's retirement, after a twenty-two-year pastorate at the First Unitarian Church, the *Los Angeles Times* referred to him as "one of the nation's most controversial ministers." True enough. But the sharp and bitter dissension that is to be found in most major faiths today might have assumed a less divisive form if other religious leaders had shown his sensitivity and perception about social issues. He has been "controversial," no doubt of it, but he has been consistently relevant. A man of courage and rare social conscience, he made the First Unitarian Church a center of "controversy," i.e., of free discussion, a forum for heretics and dissenters as well as the orthodox, where social outcasts found a warm and friendly welcome. The walls of the church have reverberated down the years to all manner of doctrine, most of it on the radical side because that was the side that most needed a forum. The list of "effete snobs" and "liberal Communists" who have spoken there is long and illustrious.

It is interesting to note that Dr. Fritchman has moved away from the position of strict humanism and has turned toward the "inner light" of discovery and renewal. "It is the persuasion of youth . . . that unless we understand what the Word means to a



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Plato, or a Jesus, or the young woman next door, the rest of religion might as well be forgotten. . . . If the Word became flesh and dwelt amongst us," the young ask, "how come we are such devouring monsters so often?" (See Ronald Sampson's "The Vanity of Humanism," *The Nation*, December 29.) Our best wishes and thanks go to Dr. Fritchman; we hope he enjoys his retirement. But we have no doubt that he will continue to be "controversial."

## Tragedy and Farce

That the Protestant majority in Northern Ireland has taken leave of its senses is indicated by the recent trial of Bernadette Devlin. The proceedings are described graphically in the *London Observer* by Mary Holland. The tradition of the patriot standing staunchly before the bar of justice, or what passes for it, is strong in Ireland, and Miss Devlin carries it on brilliantly. She has been found guilty on several of the charges against her and has received a six-month sentence. If the conviction is upheld on appeal, the farce will be carried to its foreordained conclusion—that of the power-obsessed majority blindly following its compulsions.

The trial, Miss Holland observes, "is generally agreed to be a breathtaking piece of political ineptitude." A Catholic spectator remarked, "Whoever wins, Bernie can't lose." Another said, "If they jail her, then the Mid-Ulster seat is hers for life." If they don't, the Protestants will intensify their persecution of the Catholics, and there will be more rioting.

Either way, the Protestant majority in Northern Ireland will get what it deserves.

ALIGNMENTS & CONFRONTATIONS

# THE STORMS OF THE 70s

**GEOFFREY BARRACLOUGH**
*Mr. Barraclough, Springer professor of modern history at Brandeis University, is the author of* History in a Changing World, European Unity in Thought and Action *and other books.*

Ten years ago the arrival of the sixties was greeted in a spirit of euphoria. People looked forward confidently to a period of expanding productivity and prosperity without parallel. Abroad, they anticipated a "post-Dulles" era of relaxation. The emancipation of Africa was in full swing, the last vestiges of colonialism were rapidly being swept aside. Vietnam was still in the future.

This optimism was short-lived, and today, with the Dow Jones index floating uncertainly around 800, few are likely to echo it. On the threshold of a new decade, experience has taught us to be more sober in our predictions. All we can safely say is that the forces at play in the world are more evenly balanced than at any time since 1945. Which way they will crystallize out, no one can tell, but all the indications suggest that the seventies are likely to prove a decisive turning point. They will decide how we shall move—perhaps whether we shall move—into the 21st century.

On a short-term view, it would be easy to find as good reasons for an optimistic assessment at the start of the seventies as there were at the beginning of the sixties. President Nixon's expressed intention to "de-escalate" the war in Vietnam, the long delayed decision to restore Okinawa to Japan, the United States' renunciation of biological (though not yet of chemical) warfare, the ratification of the Soviet-American "nonproliferation" treaty and other indications of *rapprochement* between Washington and Moscow, together with the revival of plans for European reunification and the new initiatives of the Brandt government in Western Germany toward accommodation with its neighbors in Eastern Europe: all these are indications of a new spirit and hopes at which optimists will eagerly grasp.

They had better not grasp too eagerly. Nothing, in the inexorable process of history, is more dangerous than to place too much reliance on short-term trends. They are straws in the wind; but the wind is not necessarily favorable. The American evacuation of Vietnam is not yet a fact, and does not look like becoming a fact if, as commonly reported, the intention is to leave 150,000 to 250,000 American troops there after "withdrawal." What is taking place, it sometimes appears, is not a revulsion against imperialism but a reappraisal of America's imperial mission in terms more suited to the seventies, and it is significant that American newspapers are already busy discussing what the United States' role in Asia should be *after* Vietnam. Nor are the signs of *détente* between Washington and Moscow and between Eastern and Western Europe as encouraging as they seem at first glance, if they represent—and this is clearly one possibility—a preliminary realignment of forces before a confrontation between the white world and the colored world of Asia and Africa. The axis of the future, someone observed recently, is the United States, Western Germany and the USSR: it is certainly more powerful, as a world alignment, than Hitler's Germany, Italy and Japan.

For anyone accustomed to taking a long-term view, this confrontation is the most significant fea-



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ture of the current world situation. Ten years ago decolonization was greeted as a panacea, allowing the ex-colonial peoples and their former masters to settle down happily side by side. In reality, it solved nothing, not even for the ex-colonial peoples themselves. The 1960s, the "decade of African independence," produced more than twenty-five military coups, as well as the Biafran war. It saw the reestablishment of European and American influence by devious but certainly not ineffective means. Above all else, it saw a widening of the gap between the developed and the underdeveloped, between the affluent and the hungry. In 1945 the income of the average American was twenty times that of the average Indian: today it is more than forty times as large.

What happened in the sixties was that the conflict between the United States and Russia, the confrontation of the capitalist and Communist systems which had dominated international politics between the death of Roosevelt in 1945 and the death of Dulles in 1959, was superseded by a "cold war" of another kind, a confrontation between the developed and the underdeveloped, which quickly turned into a confrontation between the "white" and "colored" worlds. No one today can predict what its outcome will be. At present all the trump cards appear to be in Western hands, but that is to reckon without two things. One is the linking (to use a term with which Arnold Toynbee has made us familiar) between the "external" and the "internal proletariats," between discontent at home and discontent abroad. The other is the role of China and Japan. For China and Japan occupy special positions in the "colored" world, the latter "developed" by every standard, the former, if not "developed" now, certain at least to join the ranks of the developed nations before 1980.

All we can safely say at present is that the course of events in the seventies is likely to depend far more on what happens in Asia, and to a lesser degree in Africa, than on developments in Europe and the West. And there is every reason to think that Japan and Japanese policy may be the key. Two possibilities lie before Japan, now that it has recovered a certain flexibility and freedom of maneuver. The first is to throw in its lot with the "developed" nations of the West, resuming its inter-war role as "honorary European" and acting (as perforce it had to do after 1945) as an outpost of American imperialism. The second is to lend its backing, as the most "advanced" country in the Afro-Asian world, to the "revolution of rising expectations." Not, of course, that Japan is likely in practice to choose exclusively either alternative: it is rather a question of balance. Nevertheless, if Japan does come down on the Western side, and if, in consequence, the underdeveloped Third World is compelled to look to China alone for help and sustenance, we may expect a polarization of the incipient "race war" that will be ominous for future peace.

Low, London Evening Standard

*In 1950: Mr. Low's Panacea*

In these circumstances a great deal will depend on the future of Sino-Japanese relations. Their development may well be the touchstone, for Japan itself and for the world. For Japan, as an island off the Asian mainland, can no more afford to stand aside and see the consolidation of the Afro-Asian world without (and perhaps against) it, than Great Britain, in a similar position off the European mainland, can afford to stand aside and see the consolidation of a potentially antagonistic and self-contained united Europe.

There is no doubt that the movement toward the formation of great autarchic economic blocs, lagging in the sixties, is again gathering pace. To all appearances the European Economic Community is on the verge of a new surge forward, and its example is infectious. The Andean Common Market, conceivably the first step on the road to Latin American economic integration, is the most recent indication of the current trend. Whether such groupings will finally take shape is, of course, another question. We have only to look at the history of Pan-Africanism and of Arab unity to see that the forces of nationalism may still prove too strong. But the seventies will see the issue fought out, and the result may decide the shape of things to come. The vision of a world divided into self-contained regional units is by no means necessarily welcome. Even if linked by interlocking (mainly American) business interests and investments, it carries with it the prospect of tariff barriers, discrimination and trade war, which may easily spill over into the political field.

The other factor in the situation is the link, already mentioned, between the "external" and the "internal proletariats," between the disinherited at home and the disinherited abroad. They see themselves involved in the same struggle, and the result is that the incipient "race war" is simultaneously an incipient civil war, cutting across the old political frontiers and directed indiscriminately against the powers that be, whether in the White House, the



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Kremlin, or the Elysée Palace. It was no accident that the war in Vietnam brought the race conflict in the United States to a head and transformed the age-old "Negro question"—"the American dilemma," as Gunnar Myrdal termed it—into a guerrilla front in a global "race war." Black militants saw themselves engaged in the same struggle as the Vietcong; American students looked for inspiration to Mao Tse-tung, Che Guevara and Ho Chi Minh. And it was no accident, either, that the student revolt has been an international movement, reaching from Tokyo via Berkeley to London, Paris, Berlin, Prague and Moscow. This linking of the "internal" and "external proletariats" across the entire globe, their repudiation of the "guilty men" of all parties and in all countries, has made the revulsion against the old order a basic element in the present situation.

Surveying the forces across the political spectrum, one finds a series of confrontations which are characteristic of the present. The seventies will bring their resolution. In what sense? At present, the old order is fighting back, and not without success. In the United States, the Left, particularly the student Left, is on the defensive. Vast efforts are being made, ambitious programs launched, to "tame" the American Negro. Throughout Latin America, the forces of revolution are in retreat. In Bolivia, Peru, Colombia, Venezuela, Paraguay and Guatemala they have suffered crippling reverses, and in Brazil a right-wing military government remains securely in power. In Africa and southern Asia all the refinements of "neo-colonialism" are being deployed to bring the ex-colonial peoples back into line.

It would be foolish to say that this reaction cannot succeed. It is backed by far greater forces than anything the opposition can mobilize, and has concrete benefits to offer which it would be foolish to minimize. It will offer peace of a sort, mutual respect between the Russian bear and the American eagle, a regulation of interests among different regional blocs which will avoid at least major clashes and conflicts. Spiritually, no doubt, it would produce a drab, regimented world, firmly controlled by new, sophisticated police techniques; but materially it offers affluence, a fair measure of efficiency, increasing leisure and greater opportunities, from sports stadiums to symphony halls, for leisure time pursuits. It promises the "average man," in short, what he wants, and brushes aside the real problems of the age—the problems of hunger, poverty, racial inequality and the growing disparity between the developed and the underdeveloped worlds.

The alternative the Left has to offer is less clear and far less well thought out. It is a hope and aspiration, rather than a reality, and too much left-wing thinking is an emotional rejection rather than a program and a strategy. It is a nobler hope, but it forgets, as Lenin said, that "it is not enough to be a revolutionary." The sixties saw new revolutionary forces well up in a society petrified in old postures. The seventies can just as easily see them subside, unless (again in Lenin's words) the Left knows "how to find the particular link in the chain which must be grasped with all one's strength in order to move on resolutely to the next link." Inertia is the right wing's most powerful weapon; it leaves the forces of reaction in control. And the danger is that the Left will be satisfied with hopes and aspirations, with protest and opposition. The possibility of radical change is not an illusion; but it will not materialize unless we are prepared to fight without compromise to insure that the wretched of the earth come into their inheritance. □

GIs FOR PEACE

# THE ARMY FIGHTS AN IDEA

**JOHN RECHY**
*Mr. Rechy is the author of* City of Night *and* Numbers. *His third novel,* This Day's Death, *will be published in the spring (all Grove Press).*

*El Paso*

While publicly setting "guidelines" for allowable dissent, the Army is nevertheless moving swiftly and vindictively to squelch legal protest among the GIs for Peace at the Biggs Field and Fort Bliss military installations in El Paso, Tex. The military is employing three primary tactics against this organization of soldiers opposed to the war in Vietnam: intimidation, both physical and psychological; punitive transfers; and trumped-up charges. As the number of soldiers willing to identify themselves as GIs for Peace increases, the Army's tactics are escalating; one of the leaders of the group is facing a possible sentence of six months at hard labor for a very minor infraction, charged under circumstances that look very much like a frame-up.

The group had its formal beginning in August at a meeting in the desert, at the foot of mountains in El Paso's McKelligon Canyon. Several hundred soldiers gathered there, and to the accompaniment of protest songs and speeches, proclaimed their objectives: to promote peace, regain constitutional rights for servicemen, combat racism, provide counseling for GIs, work for bettering living conditions among enlisted men, and extend legal, medical and educa-



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tional aid to the community—in a city where a very large segment of the citizens are poverty-ridden.

To promote these goals, the dissident soldiers publish *Gigline*, an excellently written periodical whose contents range from clear definitions of allowable dissent to anti-war cartoons. The Army quickly thwarted its distribution on bases by insisting that two copies of each issue must be submitted for prior approval, a provision not applied to *The Army Times* —nor to the two noticeably right-wing city newspapers. This tactic constitutes censorship by delay: by the time an issue is released—if it is released—its news has lost significance, particularly in regard to notices of peace events. Supported by contributions and subscriptions, mostly from GIs, *Gigline* is now distributed in the city.

The Army began its harassment as soon as it detected GIs for Peace. The group's first chairman, Paul Nevins, drafted out of graduate school while working for his doctorate in political science, was suddenly transferred from an artillery unit to an infantry unit—in Germany. So was Paul Disher, *Gigline*'s cartoonist. The editor of the paper's first issue received equally abrupt orders—for Vietnam, although doctors had certified that he was ill. (His orders were later rescinded, after many appeals on medical grounds.) Another GI, originally asked to infiltrate the GI peace organization but won over to its cause, had his occupational specialty changed and was summarily transferred to Korea.

By using its power to transfer personnel, the Army was thus able to try, convict and sentence the dissenters—all without trial. But immediately, other GIs rose to fill the vacuum created by the punitive reassignments. Among them were Jim Nies, a former schoolteacher, and Edward Barresi.

Feeling that the original meaning of Armistice Day, then approaching, was being perverted by a very unsilent "majority," they and other peace GIs applied to the Veterans Day parade organizers for permission to contribute a contingent of dissenters to march in the city. Permission rejected. Since the Army was sending pro-military speakers to grammar schools, the dissenting GIs wrote to the city's school administrations for permission to address the young about peace. Request rejected.

Nevertheless, approximately seventy-five of them gathered with peace placards at one side of the parade reviewing stand on Armistice Day. While not officially joining the demonstrating GIs, the vast majority of spectator soldiers, some in uniform, were clearly sympathetic. As the fat military parade crawled past them, the dissident soldiers flashed peace signs—which were spontaneously answered by other soldiers mounted, apparently against their wishes, on ominous, lethargic weapons. This response to the peace symbol by members of the parade, military and otherwise, would be vehemently denied by a parade organizer, although photographs and newsreel film had captured the flashed "V's."

Obviously as a result of the success of these activities, Nies, Barresi and another GI for Peace were called before an academic review board of the Defense Language Institute, the Army school they attended as students of the Vietnamese language. The reason given for this summons was that their grades had dropped. Failing grade, however, is 70; the lowest average grade of the three was 77. Indeed, Barresi was considered by his instructors to be among the school's outstanding students. The decline in grades was attributable to their refusal to read aloud some of the more highly propagandized and war-oriented lessons in the course.

Normally, a summons before this board—a majority of its five or so members are officers—results in a superficial inquiry into why the student is experiencing difficulty in the course. At worst, a mild reprimand is issued. A failing Green Beret had only recently been recycled into another course. The three peace GIs, however, found themselves the center of an evident politically oriented interrogation. Nies was asked by a major whether he would be able to "search out, contact, and destroy the enemy." He refused to answer on the ground that the matter was irrelevant to his academic standing.

With fourteen more weeks to go in their school cycle, all three were suddenly transferred—only hours before the November moratorium activities—two to Fort Ord, the other to Polk. In at least one instance, "disruptive influence" was cited. To date, at least ten transfers can be directly attributed to activities among the GIs for Peace during its life span of only a few months.

But transfers have not been the only means of intimidation. Other members of the peace group found themselves the objects of intensive scrutiny. During a company inspection, three rooms out of sixteen were singled out—all three belonging to members of GIs for Peace. Students were questioned by the CID, the Army's FBI, about activities of other students. Copies of *Gigline* were seized, later returned. Forbidden to name the peace organization as a beneficiary of his Army insurance policy, Albert Singerman, a veteran of Vietnam, was confronted by an enraged sergeant. "He struck out at me, ranting," says Singerman, "as I was trying to explain to him my right to dissent." Singerman subsequently filed a complaint of assault. Some mail divisions on the posts were ordered to notify security personnel when copies of *Gigline* were being received.

The threat of court-martial began to loom. Papers were drawn against one of the organization members for distributing *Gigline* on post. Although the charges were later reduced, the warning was out. Rumors spread that the information office for the posts was outlining methods on how to proceed against the dissenters.

Sometimes the pressure was insidious. Jerry Ma-



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garo, one of the founders of the group and a lawyer who had become the unofficial legal adviser of the peace GIs, suddenly found himself rooming with a soldier who had been busted on pot charges; it was as if the Army were clumsily setting up any possible means of entrapment.

Minor offenses, usually overlooked, became major infractions, and always charged against those known to be members of the peace organization. Two soldiers involved in insignificant parking infractions found themselves without passes, and therefore separated from their families. Says Thomas McNeil, one of the two: "We were charged with having parked our motorcycles in a no-parking area from which two others, not cited, had just driven away. My pass was held over me as blackmail until I accepted company punishment." Accepting such punishment is tantamount to admitting guilt.

One GI, pressing for a reason for the withdrawal of his pass, was told: "Pick your reason." The day before, he had spoken at a peace demonstration in the city. Another soldier, Ron Withem, who had written several letters of complaint against the Army's punitive activities, found that his orders for promotion were the only ones missing among those of his immediate group.

Despite the rapidly escalating pressure, dissenting GIs announced that during the November moratorium they would show their opposition to the war by avoiding the mess halls; they suggested a period of meditation in a chapel. At Biggs Field, they were met in one designated chapel by a menacing group of officers obviously checking name tags.

"The chapel itself was crowded with about a dozen plain-clothes men," says Ralph Skinner, a former student at Occidental College in California and the University of Chicago. "I looked around to see if they were from the press—there were no press signs. They were either Military Intelligence men or men from the Criminal Investigation Division. Riot-helmeted MPs in cars cruised the block."

Even though confronted by such implicit threats, about sixty soldiers had gone through the menacing ranks of plain-clothes men and officers at the chapel; and about three-fourths of the neighboring mess hall was empty at the noon meal—although officers, who ordinarily avoid enlisted men's dining rooms, were that day markedly in attendance.

To insure a blackout of the Army's shady activities, a man identifying himself as a major from the post information office, had earlier called a television station scheduled to cover the event. "The whole thing has been canceled," the newsman was told. "A colossal flop," an Army officer later croaked about the chapel attendance the Army had systematically, but unsuccessfully, attempted to thwart.

(This was not the first incident, nor would it be the last, involving the chapel, a traditional symbol of refuge. During the October moratorium, the same chapel was closed during the noon hour—for "waxing," a chore ordinarily performed at night; and in December a group of men at Biggs Field were denied permission to hold a service honoring the war dead.)

At Fort Bliss that same day, previously covert intimidation surfaced. Says Magaro: "The word had been passed that those opposing the war avoid the mess halls or report on sick call. Commanders let it be known they would check the mess halls for absentees and obtain names of those on sick call."

Finally the threat of court-martial materialized—against Francis Lenski, new chairman of the dissident GIs. His ears ringing loudly from that afternoon's firing on the Army range, Lenski was on his way to the barracks when he became aware of a sergeant yelling and gesturing to him. Realizing that retreat was sounding and that he had not come to attention, Lenski did so quickly.

Although retreat is often ignored except on formal occasions, Lenski is faced with a special court-martial for "failing to render the proper courtesies during 'Retreat Ceremonies,' by not saluting."

The allegations are backed, clumsily, by statements from four second lieutenants, including one who had earlier that day expressed antagonism toward Lenski's peace activities. Laboriously explaining the peculiarly restrictive position of the vehicle they were in, two of the lieutenants stated self-consciously that they themselves did not come to attention during retreat, because, as they explained: (1) "The car was situated in such a way as to prevent us from getting out . . . without interrupting the ceremony"; and (2) "I was unable to exit my car due to the fact that on backing out of my parking place I had been pinned by another car [and] the driver of that car stopped his car during the playing of *Retreat* in such a position as to not allow me to open my doors freely to exit." How both sides of a car were blocked by another car is a mystery of metaphysical proportions.

Stumbling on his own rhetoric, one of the lieutenants added: "To execute the proper measures to free myself enough to open the doors, in my opinion, would have constituted a greater disrespect and disturbance than remaining quiet and in place." In place he, and the other, did remain—and quiet, until the time came to press charges against Lenski. To date, the charges are pending.

Members of GIs for Peace are intelligent, dedicated, optimistic. One is immediately struck by their deep belief that things can indeed be better, and by their desire to help make them so. One is also struck by their total lack of Marxist or radical orientation—a fact which, whether good or bad, makes the Army's mutterings of "Commies" a typical absurdity. The peace GIs scrupulously follow the guidelines for allowable dissent enunciated by the Department of the Army itself.



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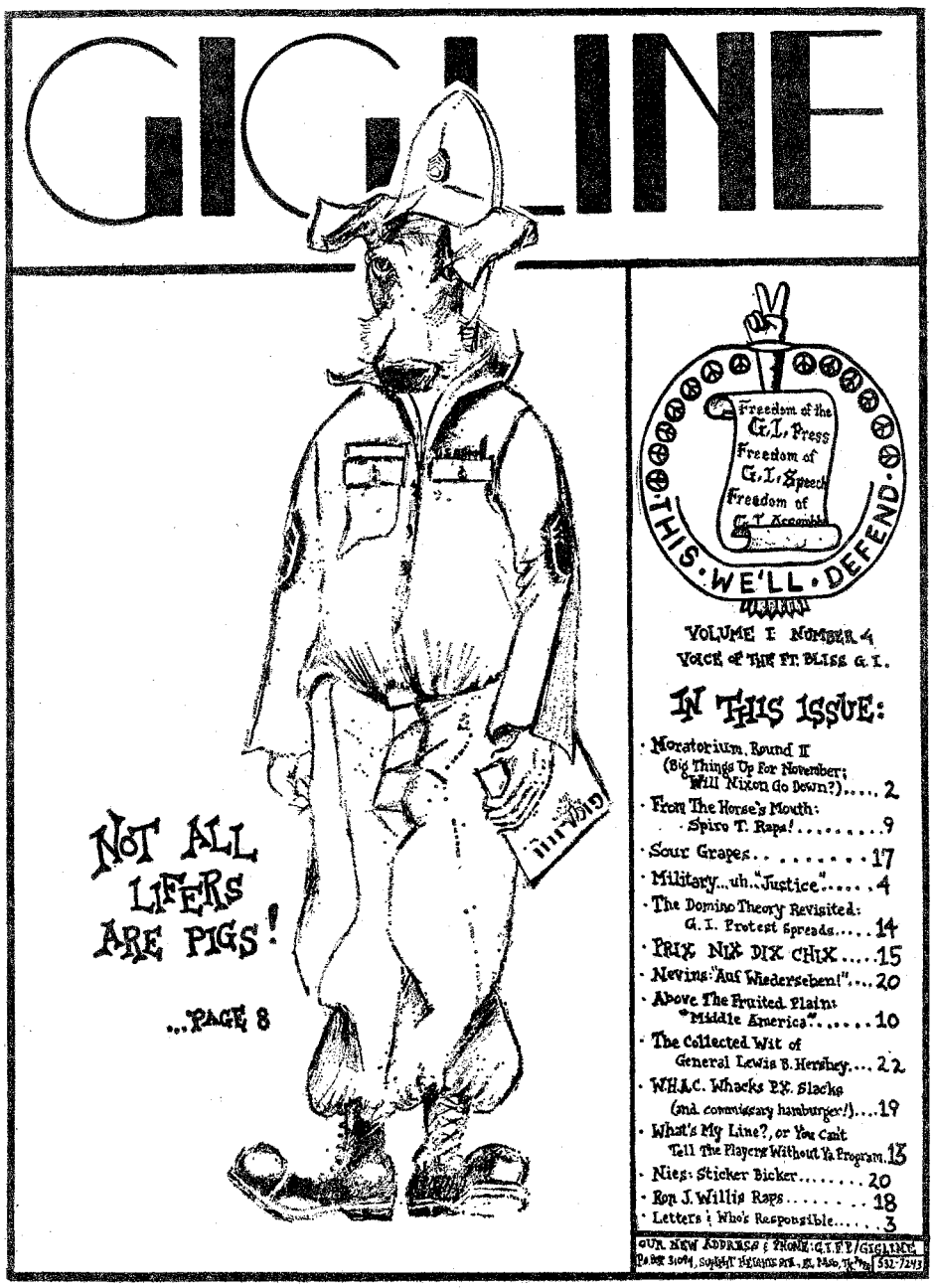
The concerned young men enrolled in the Defense Language Institute are particularly revolted by what they view as the racist attitudes at the school, where some Army regulars have been known to carry as souvenirs plastic-encased ears of alleged Vietcong; these were shown to Vietnamese members of the faculty, who are looked down on by many of the Regular Army personnel.

Not only do some of the officers express contempt for the objectives of the school itself ("First you learn to shine your boots, and then you become affluent [*sic*] in Vietnamese," said one second lieutenant during a morning formation), but some Regular Army personnel reveal much more dangerous hostility. A sergeant publicly professed his belief that all Vietnamese should be wiped out, nominal allies and avowed enemies alike.

Further, the lessons in the school are themselves propaganda. Says Withem: "They read: 'Come see the villages being burned by incendiary bombs.' " McNeil adds: "In drawings accompanying the lessons, the Vietcong are presented as complete parodies of 'the sneaky Oriental'—treacherous, with grossly overslanted eyes."

"It's *all* unreal, including the transfers," says George Scheurer, vice chairman of GIs for Peace. "The life expectancy of each chairman is ten days," another points out. Scheurer himself has been given abrupt transfer orders to Alaska.

Still the GIs maintain a dedication to their goals. Recently a group of them attempted during visiting hours to investigate an unprovoked tear-gassing at the Fort Bliss stockade. (Recognized by guards as they tried to interview inmates, the soldiers were


GIGLINE
NOT ALL LIFERS ARE PIGS!
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Freedom of G.I. Speech
Freedom of G.I. Assembly
THIS · WE'LL · DEFEND
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asked to surrender their notes. They refused, and visiting hours were abruptly terminated. The incident is still sealed in secrecy.) And the weekly meetings continue to draw new members, despite the fact that the soldiers are sure that at least one among them is an Army informer. Since all their activities are legal and open, they easily ignore that fact.

They write letters to Senators. They get in touch with the Inspector General's office. They regularly send releases to the local, and hostile, newspapers. These are buried in the back pages and never deemed of sufficient interest to be sent to the wire services. Thus the soldiers have encountered a "press curtain" about their peace activities.

"You have to stand a great deal of frustration to resist the intimidation," says Scheurer. Apparently many GIs have reached the threshold of resistance. But the Army, threatened, lashes out at them, determined to silence them. A major at a recent command staff meeting is said to have boasted, according to minutes of the meeting, that he will disenroll five students from the language school in the near future and take personal responsibility for doing so. With its awesome power to harass, intimidate and punish, the Army may succeed in squashing the dissident soldiers.

But the GIs for Peace indicate that they too will stand firm. Perhaps, if they manage to do so against the heavy odds, they will supply the answer to the thus far only rhetorical question: What would happen if they gave a war and no one came? □

TOO GOOD FOR ARKANSAS

# ONE YEAR OF PRISON REFORM

**TOM MURTON**

*Mr. Murton was assistant professor of criminology at Southern Illinois University before being appointed by Gov. Winthrop Rockefeller to reform the Arkansas prison system. Earlier, he had served in Alaska as superintendent of an Army stockade, and when Alaska became a state he became acting chief of corrections. Mr. Murton's* Accomplices in Crime: The Arkansas Prison Scandal, *written in collaboration with Joe Hyams, is published this month by Grove Press.*

On January 29, 1968, Claude Overton, manager of the Cummins Prison Farm, an installation of the Arkansas State Penitentiary, informed chief security officer Harold A. Porter that, because rain was expected in the afternoon, he would not be working the longline (inmate work force) after lunch. Porter therefore stopped by the infirmary about 1:15 P.M. to pick up Reuben Johnson, who had related a bizarre tale of inmates having been murdered and buried in the mule pasture known as Bodiesburg. A squad of Negro inmates marched through the pasture to a point selected by Johnson and proceeded to dig in three adjacent sites.

Livestock manager Frank Crawford and I were in the general area at the time when an inmate came up to us and matter of factly stated: "Mr. Murton, we've struck a coffin." I moved to the site and supervised the excavation of three graves which yielded three mutilated bodies placed in the exact location and in the same condition as Reuben Johnson had indicated. Two were decapitated and the skull of the third had been crushed to the size of a grapefruit.

Within the hour, the remains of the three inmates had been dug up, preserved as evidence, the official agencies had been notified and the squad of inmates had moved triumphantly back to the barracks to relate events to the jubilant prison population. They left behind three gaping scars in the mule pasture —mute testimony to the degradation imposed upon the penal slaves of Arkansas.

The state's prison system had been operated on fear for a century, and most of the traditional methods had been used to instill it: beatings, needles under the fingernails, stompings, the "hide" (a leather strap 5 inches wide and 5 feet long), starvation and an electric device whose terminals were attached to the genitals of the inmate while a trusty or "warden" gleefully turned the crank. True, the prison had made a profit during the previous fifty years. The champions of the Arkansas prison system proudly boasted—and still do—that no appropriated funds were required to support the "convicts." But exploitation of inmates was effective only under the spur of threats, and the ultimate threat was murder. There is ample evidence that the illegal executions uncovered that January day were not isolated events.

The prison has survived the cycle of scandal and reform every twenty or thirty years and has resisted with equal success the occasional token objections from those who became "concerned" about the treatment of prisoners. But that was before Winthrop Rockefeller became the first Republican governor of the state since Reconstruction. Rockefeller expressed understandable indignation over a state police report, prepared in August of 1966, which catalogued the cruelty practiced in the Arkansas prison system. As a candidate, he pledged elimination of corruption in state government, efficiency and "to hire a professional penologist to run the state prison system." [See "Arkansas Prison Farm" by Robert Pearman, *The Nation,* December 26, 1966.] Rockefeller won the election with a mandate



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from the electorate to end the century of decadence in Arkansas.

A routine police investigation at another unit of the penitentiary system, Tucker Prison Farm, in January of 1967 had disclosed Superintendent Pink Booher sitting at his desk behind a Thompson submachine gun, ready to repel any attack from the inmates who had threatened to shoot him if he attempted to enter the prison proper. This was no idle threat because, in the Arkansas tradition, the total guard force consisted of inmates who were issued guns and instructed to watch over the other prisoners. At that time, only six hired staff and some forty-eight inmate guards were authorized at Tucker. That was one way to save money for the state.

Governor Rockefeller promptly dismissed the superintendent and three other staff members. And for the third time in less than a year, the Arkansas State Police was placed in command of some 300 inmates on the 4,500-acre prison farm.

As one of several consultants to the new state administration, I was called to Tucker to evaluate the situation. In the latter part of February 1967 I was hired as superintendent. The first thing that struck me was the atmosphere of total despair. The inmates did not smile, laugh or talk. Their eyes, their expressions and their demeanor were a vivid portrayal of hopelessness. We found that control of inmates, work assignments, promotion, food rations, bed assignments, visiting privileges, commissary privileges, furloughs, laundry and clothing procedures, parole eligibility, inmate funds, and the very survival of the inmate had always been delegated to a select few powerful inmates who operated the prison. The system had become ingrained because of lack of outside staff, an apathetic civilian population, indifference on the part of the Governor and the greed of both inmate trusties and various citizens who had a vested interest in the prison and its profits.

To make the system operable, the trusties had been granted certain privileges, including graft obtained from all inmate goods and services, freedom to sell liquor and narcotics, to gamble and lend money, to live in "squatter shacks" outside the main prison, to spend the night with a female companion and to profit from the illegal traffic in prison produce.

Of the two staff members remaining at the time of my appointment, one resigned and the other was fired. That left me in command of a fifteen-man police detachment quartered at the prison, with no civilian staff and an "uptight" inmate population. The first order of business was to arm the state troopers, who had been prohibited by the inmate guards from carrying arms. The power of the inmate guard force was so absolute that when Governor Rockefeller first visited the prison he was not allowed in until his bodyguard had surrendered his gun to an inmate at the front gate.

That spring, the legislature increased the authorized staff at Tucker from six to thirty-eight officers, and I immediately imported a cadre of officers with whom I had worked before. Our basic strategy was to treat the inmate with dignity—a concept heretofore unheard of in Arkansas. Trust was built up in the prison population by daily decisions which cumulatively demonstrated that the prison administration was actually committed to inmate welfare.

However, the real danger was in the inmate power structure, and an attempt to eliminate every aspect of that power would have been foolhardy because, in varying degrees, inmates determine the operation of *all* such institutions. We decided to accept the existence of inmate power, but to substitute, if we could, a legitimate form of self-government for the traditionally exploitive one.

The prison reforms received no assistance from the official agencies of criminal justice, the legislature, the prison board, the prison study commission, other state agencies or the public. As a result, the staff and inmates were drawn together in efforts to reform the prison while providing mutual defense against collective opposition from outside.

My sole authority was that granted by the Governor. Nevertheless, we were able in a few months to feed and clothe the inmates, hire competent staff, upgrade the agricultural programs, establish educational and vocational training programs, provide a rational religious counseling service (to replace forced church attendance under the gun) eliminate corruption, move the trusties into the barracks, and practically eliminate the rapes and other homosexual assaults.

Inmates were no longer required to act as servants for the staff; they no longer worked outside, tilling the soil for private citizens. Prison-grown food no longer went "out the gate" into private hands; livestock management was upgraded by acquisition of new breeding stock and the institution of sound animal husbandry practices. And a host of minimal creature comforts were provided. We ultimately broke the convict power structure by eliminating the monetary exchange that had maintained the inmate economy, with the attendant gambling, loan rackets and assaults.

I acknowledged that the inmates had information, not available to the professional staff, that could be effective in reforming the prison. One-half of the newly elected inmate council constituted the classification committee which determined work assignments, promotion and the ever critical decisions as to which inmates would be issued guns. It should be noted that no inmate whom the committee classified as minimum custody ever escaped during our administration.

The other half of the inmate council became the disciplinary committee. It proved much more effective than the administration in assigning punishments (I had abolished all corporal punishment). I



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sat with both committees and reserved the right of veto, but never had to exercise it. A form of responsible self-government was emerging.

Breaking the power structure produced great anxiety among the trusties and culminated in a rash of escapes. (Arkansas is one of the few states where the prison administration must be concerned with the escape of *guards*.) During the first half of my tenure at Tucker, we lost thirty-eight inmates; in the last half, only one inmate escaped. As the tensions eased, we were able to open up death row, where the ten condemned men—one white and nine black—had been confined to their cells under rigid security. Eventually, they were playing in ball games, performing work assignments with the white inmates, attending school, church and vocational classes, playing in the prison band and finally were eating in the dining hall.

One of the last innovations at Tucker, toward the end of 1967, was the inauguration of prison dances, to which inmates were allowed to invite their girl friends or wives (either, but not both). There were no incidents at these parties, no hurled insults, no drinking and no rape. One unplanned result of the relaxed atmosphere was the intermingling of staff and inmates as dancing partners and the unpardonable sin (in Arkansas) of interracial dancing.

By Christmas of 1967, a woman supervisor was able to work at the prison laundry, female employees ate in the prison dining hall, female teachers conducted classes inside the institution with no guard present and the staff and their families attended programs, sitting with the general inmate population. The most significant change was in the attitude of the inmates. Fear had disappeared, a new community had been created and despair had been replaced by hope. Our energies were no longer directed toward overcoming the inmate population, but toward coping with the state bureaucracy and dealing with our changing relationship with the Governor's office.

That was the situation at Tucker as my staff and I prepared to assault Cummins. The word is used advisedly because it became evident that it might be necessary to shoot our way into the prison to install me as superintendent of the entire prison system. The opposition from both inmates and officials at Cummins was so concerted that death threats had been made against both me and Harold Porter, who earlier had transferred to Cummins. The official police assessment of the situation was that I could not take over the superintendency without an armed force of about 1,000 men. Such a force, composed of state troopers, National Guardsmen and airborne troops, was made available.

I declined the help, preferring to choose for myself the back-up force with whom I would entrust my life. Consequently, I initially took over the institution—peacefully—with the help of a single man, inmate Sheriff "Chainsaw" Jack Bell, who was serving a life sentence for killing a man by sawing off his head.

In a few weeks we managed to gain a semblance of control of the institution, dismissed the more hostile and brutal employees, changed key inmate guards, improved living conditions for both inmates and livestock, eliminated inmate services to the staff, stopped corruption in the medical services and modified procedures at the Women's Reformatory located at Cummins.

That institution of about forty women had constituted the "lost souls" of the Arkansas prison system. They customarily were transported in the same transfer vans with the men and were routinely raped en route to the prison or to and from the state hospital. Many female inmates refused medical attention for fear of being raped on the way to surgery.

Negro inmates among the women had been forced to clip grass with their fingernails as "therapy"; they received only scraps of food left on the table after the white inmates had finished eating. The sewing endeavors in the reformatory were primarily for the benefit of the matrons and their families. Exercise, dancing, talking during the evening, smoking, sitting on the bed, looking at a man (or worse yet, talking to a man) were all punished as serious offenses. The usual sentence was solitary confinement in a concrete cell, which had no plumbing, water or heat. If a prisoner rebelled. the head matron would call her husband, who would "lay on the hide" as the inmate was held to the floor by trusties. One former superintendent had had a buzzer installed next to his bed. With it, he could summon his favorite girl friend from the nearby reformatory.

Mrs. Frank Crawford, whom I placed in charge, promptly corrected the more obvious faults, as we had done at the other institution. We later took a bus load of female inmates to Tucker to participate in the dances. An inmate who had been taken to the State Hospital for childbirth, was allowed to bring her baby back to the prison and to keep him in the main dormitory in an area screened off as a "nursery."

A wedding was planned to legalize a common-law relationship between a pregnant inmate and her man. Mrs. Crawford was to be the matron of honor; her husband Frank was to be best man; my visiting sister, Paula, was to play the organ; Jon Kimbrell, the Tucker chaplain, was to officiate; and I was asked by the prospective bride to give her away. The ceremony was to take place in the main prison auditorium on March 11, 1968. But events which took place four days before that date forced cancellation of the plans.

In thirteen months, we had revolutionized Tucker and were well on the way to doing the same at Cummins. We achieved what we did in spite of



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the hostile prison board (which hoped for my failure), the system of criminal justice (which blocked my efforts to prosecute those who stole from the prison), the legislature (which tried to censure me), the citizens of the area (who could no longer steal from the prison), the grand jury (which threatened to indict me for "grave-robbing") and the trusties and staff (some of whom in both groups threatened to kill me).

We also had to withstand the sabotage of equipment sent to Cummins for "repair," the shooting of our livestock at night, the deliberate burning of our slaughterhouse, the refusal of Cummins officials to can our produce and the interference by state purchasing officials, consultants, the Governor's aides and other state officials. *All* reform achievements were accomplished under these adverse conditions.

The year 1968 promised to be different. We had gained the impetus of reform by the Tucker experience, and solving the Cummins problems was essentially a matter of time and strategy. Four of the five members of the old prison board resigned rather than confirm my appointment as permanent superintendent of the prison system. This action cleared the way for Governor Rockefeller to gain control of a state department for the first time since his election.

John Haley, his first appointee to the board a year previously, was elevated to chairman and four other men of seemingly progressive views were appointed in mid-January. Haley, a practicing attorney, was joined by psychiatrist Dr. Peyton Kolb; Marshal Rush, a professional farmer; W. L. Currie, a vocational teacher and the first Negro member of the board, and William Lytle, a minister and professor of theology. Lytle had been appointed at my urging because he had been instrumental in my coming to Arkansas and had expressed deep concern for the prison. Our acquaintance dated from my wedding, at which he had officiated some fifteen years earlier.

We waited in anticipation for Governor Rockefeller, through the board, to effect some of the changes beyond the power of the superintendent. Now the audit of prior prison management could be commenced; gains we had made at Tucker could be consolidated under the supervision of Robert Van Winkle; progressive bills could be prepared for the legislature; a contract could be signed with Tennessee correctional authorities for housing and care of female prisoners; federal funds could be obtained pursuant to grant requests then pending; livestock management could be brought into the 20th century; the inmates could be properly clothed and fed; the Cummins power structure could be broken; and a thorough investigation of the bodies in the mule pasture could be completed.

These were all within our grasp, but the board members, sensing no real support from the Governor, did not reach out to seize true prison reform. Instead, they chose to undermine every aspect of our work. Governor Rockefeller became frightened on the very threshold of success, and deferred to opponents who desired the prison system to remain as it had been. They, and his own advisers, convinced him that I was damaging the image of Arkansas and that his continued stay in office depended on my immediate removal.

The new prison board officially met with me for the first time on March 2, 1968 and informed me that I probably would not be appointed as commissioner to guide the new Department of Correction. Five days later, when the board again met with me, I was summarily fired and placed under house arrest. Although no reasons were given at the time, Governor Rockefeller and John Haley at a press conference the following day accused me, in part, of being a "poor prison administrator" (although Haley had stated I demonstrated "near genius" in revolutionizing Tucker); of knowing nothing about agriculture (ignoring my degree in agriculture, that I had farmed and also taught the subject); and of having ordered asparagus tips for the inmates (a grave accusation contrary to the facts).

It is now nearly two years since Governor Rockefeller appointed his "progressive" Board of Correction. Sufficient time has elapsed to provide some tentative assessment of the direction of prison reform in Arkansas. State Rep. Ivan Rose appealed to his colleagues during a special session of the legislature in 1968: "We got rid of Murton for you so give us a good vote [on prison reform legislation]." They did not then nor have they since.

Anticipated federal grants have not been forthcoming, promised prison industries have not material-



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ized and no contract with Tennessee has been negotiated for care of female prisoners. It was necessary to sell part of the dairy herd in 1968 and again in 1969 in order to provide prison operating funds. An audit of prior prison management, conducted in 1968, yielded evidence of official corruption. The board suppressed the report and no action has been taken against the accused. No superintendent since my removal has had the courage to abolish the money exchange system at Cummins. Hence the inmate power structure continues to exist with the related graft, corruption, intimidation, bootlegging, gambling and assaults. The present commissioner admits that there have been eighteen stabbings and five deaths since I left.

The inmate council and the disciplinary and classification committees have been abolished. Inmates again work as servants for the staff. The heads of new inmates are shaved as part of the degradation ceremony of prison initiation. Our open press policy has been eliminated, and the prison facilities are in effect closed to newsmen. Thus there is no independent agency to report prison conditions to the public.

Seven key staff members were either fired or resigned when I was forced out. Since then, sixteen of my former staff have been removed. During the first year, seventy-two of ninety-seven prison employees left the prison system. There was no prison physician for eighteen months after my departure. It was eight months before an applicant for commissioner could be enticed to Arkansas. My allegedly "incapable" dairy supervisor was replaced by a "professional" dairyman who shortly thereafter was not only fired for incompetence but was arrested by the state police at the front gate of the prison while trying to smuggle a stolen heifer from the institution.

At Cummins, the inmates raised havoc with the unfinished isolation unit during the summer of 1968 in protest of treatment which they contended constituted "cruel and unusual punishment." The federal court agreed and prison officials were ordered to devise other punitive measures.

Supt. Victor C. Urban then demonstrated his ingenuity by chaining inmates to a fence in a small compound for several days and nights. They received no bedding, no jackets, and had to sleep—if they slept—on the bare ground. But to the inmates so confined, the worst aspect was the humiliation of being forced to squat in the open compound to defecate, while chained to the fence and being observed by visitors.

These facts were reported by the press in the fall of 1968, but the incidents were overshadowed by the shot-gunning of about 100 inmates who sat peacefully in the prison yard in protest against inadequate food, being forced to work from sunup to sundown, being threatened with a pistol by the rider (inmate foreman) and the reinstitution of the "convict doctor" system.

Prison officials later conceded that the protesting inmates had posed no threat, nor were they attempting to riot, create a disturbance or escape. Yet, Associate Superintendent Gary Haydis, with Urban's prior consent, is said to have ordered the shooting. Twenty-four inmates were wounded, one of them losing an eye. Urban proclaimed: "I will not permit any inmate body to take over and rule, which is what this one *would probably have wanted to do*" (emphasis added).

Haydis has since returned to his former employment as director of training of the California Department of Corrections, from which he had been granted a leave of absence while helping to *reform* the Arkansas prison. In the summer of 1969, he was indicted by a federal grand jury in Little Rock for his part in shooting the inmates. On December 16, Haydis went to trial in federal court in Little Rock. Two days later Judge Smith Henley issued a directed verdict of acquittal to the jury based on what he termed a "lack of evidence." Urban has been promoted to Deputy Commissioner of Correction in Arkansas.

The investigation of the bodies in the mule pasture ended with a fraudulent police report which purports to support the myth that what we found was actually a "paupers' graveyard." No more bodies have been exhumed; no prison graveyard has been established; and the present administration has, by silence, in effect condoned a prison system of brutality, torture and murder.

At Tucker, the death-row inmates are again restricted to their quarters a large portion of the day. Only two now have any assigned work project. All forms of legitimate inmate power which we had instituted have been abolished and exploitive trusties have been moved back into positions of authority. The man chosen to be inmate sheriff at Tucker was sentenced to prison for twenty-one years upon conviction for "assault with intent to commit rape." In October of 1969, he "arrested" an employee of the prison before she reached the farm, drove to a lonely road and raped her—to the amazement of the prison superintendent, J. R. Price.

Our plans for religious and educational facilities to be attached to the main building and to be designed and built by inmate labor, were abolished. An architect was retained by the board and construction was turned over to outside contractors. A magnificent edifice has risen from the watermelon patch adjacent to the parking lot in front of the administration building. This complex thus far has cost between $75,000 and $80,000, according to the commissioner's office, and was still incomplete in October 1969. When finished, it will provide space for religious services, parole services, vocational rehabilitation offices, classrooms, a library and visiting.

The only unresolved detail is how the inmates will be able to get to this beautiful structure. Tucker houses maximum custody prisoners and this new monument to God, while attesting to the fact that



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religious needs of the inmates are indeed being met, nonetheless is located *outside* the security perimeter of the prison facilities. It will be necessary either to erect a guard tower behind the pulpit or to march the men to church services under the gun—the system employed for generations before our intrusion in Arkansas.

At the Women's Reformatory, the board promptly removed the baby. Dancing was abolished, female inmates are not allowed to listen to the prison band and must be inside the quarters before the male inmates march back from the fields at sundown, lest they be seen. Supt. Ralph Roberts has even denied the Catholic women (about one-third of the population) the right to hear mass: it would be conducted by a priest and such association is considered "immoral" by the administration.

The female prisoners are beaten by the head trusty and thrown into the "hole" for minor infractions. The isolation units still have no plumbing, water or heat; the meal served to an inmate in isolation is only one spoonful of each food item served on the regular menu. And the toilets are still tin cans.

This past summer, two female inmates in isolation were stripped and kept naked for sixty days while mosquitoes feasted on their nude bodies. Conditions became so bad in 1968 that, for the first time, a female inmate tried to escape. In October 1969, two more were listed as "missing."

It was my stated conviction after leaving Arkansas that the prison had reverted to its evil ways. To refute the allegations, the commissioner granted me permission to make a personal inspection of all prison facilities in October 1969. Although I had been kept adequately informed of the decline of the prison, I was not prepared for what I found: both inmates and staff reported to me that conditions have returned almost to the level prior to our intervention. They speak of assaults, beatings by staff and inmates, extortion, liquor rackets, lack of clothing (some fifteen inmates were then working in the fields without shoes), threats on the lives of inmates, pistol whippings and shooting at inmates to speed up field work. The inmates uniformly report the food to be atrocious.

What discouraged me most was the evidence that the flickering light of hope we had ignited had been extinguished. The inmates look at the staff with distrust, suspicion and fear. Once more they shuffle silently to and from work, trapped in the futile, endless cycle of imprisonment, pondering the hopelessness of their plight and the mystery of how they were cheated of the promised emancipation from penal slavery.

In March 1969, Arkansas Commissioner of Correction Robert Sarver testified before the United States Senate: "When I read of an exposé of homosexualities, bribings, escapes [and] political corruption in prisons, I think most knowledgeable correction administrators think: 'So, what else is new?' "

There is little doubt in my mind that Governor Rockefeller was committed to prison reform during his campaign of 1966 and even after his inauguration in 1967. But power structures can tolerate only a limited amount of integrity. There comes a time when the new administration discovers that its other objectives are threatened by the reforms that have been instituted to correct the deficiencies of the former system. Previous Arkansas administrations stand condemned of knowing about prison conditions but not caring. The Rockefeller administration is guilty of knowing, pledging true reform—and recanting for the sake of political expediency. It must share the greater burden of responsibility for what ultimately happens to the prisoners of Arkansas. □

CALIFORNIA SHOWS HOW

# DIVORCE WITHOUT SQUALOR

**AIDAN R. GOUGH**

*Mr. Gough, a professor of law at the University of Santa Clara, was formerly executive director of the Governor's Commission on the Family, and is an adviser on marriage and divorce law to the National Conference of Commissioners on Uniform State Laws.*

As of January 1, California's roughly 120,000 divorces per year will be obtained under a new set of legal standards, the Family Law Act, and several important steps will have been taken to rid the process of some of its duplicity and anguish. Enacted last fall, the new law (sponsored by Sen. Donald Grunsky and Assemblyman James Hayes) grew out of studies and recommendations made by the Governor's Commission on the Family appointed by Gov. Edmund G. Brown in 1966.

Like every other state, California until now has clung to a system whereby marriages are dissolved chiefly on the ground of fault, on the commission of some such matrimonial offense as adultery, desertion, extreme cruelty and the like. Under this tradition, divorce can be obtained only if one spouse can adduce proof that the other has committed some act or course of conduct so grave that it shatters the union by definition of law—and then only if the complaining spouse (the wife, in 77 per cent of California's divorces, according to a 1966 study) has committed no marital offense; has neither consented to nor encouraged the acts of the offending spouse; and



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has not forgiven the behavior complained of. In 1799 an English court declared that, "where neither spouse was innocent of wrongdoing, both should live together and find sources of mutual forgiveness in the humiliation of mutual guilt." Thus marriage has been regarded by the law as a kind of penance, from which exit could be won only by the upright, and both marriage and the law have been debased in the process.

The termination of intolerable marriages has been made to depend largely upon the occurrence of events which the law has long treated as causes, but which aren't. The behavioral sciences can demonstrate that adultery and extreme cruelty are less causes of marital breakdown than symptoms of a deeper malaise, of a relationship gone bad. The law has not kept pace with such knowledge. What we today think of as grounds for divorce were taken over from the ecclesiastical law which originally had cognizance of marital actions. There they were not bases for divorce as we know it but rather of ecclesiastical permission to live separate and apart.

The Anglo-American legal system has treated the question of whether the court should dissolve a marriage much as it has treated questions of whether there has been offense against the penal law, or the wreaking of personal injury by a stranger, or the breach of a mercantile contract: that is to say, by trial on adversary pleading and proof. This mode works generally well when the matter charged is that X burgled Y's store on or about the 15th of December, or that A made a certain promise to B and then breached it. However, in divorce proceedings, the critical question ought not to be whether A did some particular act to B but whether the marriage is irredeemably broken down, irretrievably dead. The hearing upon dissolution of marriage should be more akin to an inquest than it is to a trial.

For this determination, the adversary process simply doesn't fit, and it does harm. There is evidence, for example, that an increasingly significant factor in marital breakdown is the rise in marital expectations. As society has moved, we have come to expect compatibility of a mate—and in every area: sexual, intellectual, social and financial. We all know of marriages that, on such bases, don't work, even though neither spouse could, or would, by objective proof establish the other as a consummate rat.

The insistence upon the adversary system, with its sorry parade of corroborating witnesses who must testify to matters they cannot (or at least, one would think, should not) know; its forced casting of one party as "innocent" and the other as "guilty"; its ordering of marital property and support according to those spurious labels has made a shambles of the juridical process. A few years ago in California nearly 400,000 signatures were collected in quite a short time for an initiative proposal that would have removed divorces from the courts entirely and placed them in an administrative agency created for the purpose. The proposal just failed to qualify for the ballot, but its significance was not lost on California lawmakers. (Public support for reform has been vocal and nearly overwhelming. For example, when the Governor's Commission proposals were published, they were quickly and strongly endorsed by four Roman Catholic dioceses in northern California and by the National Council of Churches.) Only six of the state's forty Senators and six of the eight Assemblymen voted against the new law.

That, then, is the background of the new Family Law Act. It is unique not so much for what it does—proposals for the abolition of the fault system of divorce have been numerous both in America and in the United Kingdom—as that it does it. It is the first major divorce reform enacted by an American jurisdiction and one may be confident that others will follow in its wake.

The legal process cannot eliminate the searing hurt or prevent the abrasion of divorce, but at least it can seek not to exacerbate the harm. Toward that end, the new law abolishes fault grounds. It even eliminates the term "divorce" and substitutes "dissolution of marriage," though it does not follow the recommendation of the Governor's Commission that actions for divorce and for the annulment of voidable marriages be brought under a single form. Under the new statute, the court can dissolve a marriage only upon a finding of "irreconcilable differences" or of incurable insanity, the one ground retained from existing law. "Irreconcilable differences"—a rather unhappy phrase for breakdown of marriage—are defined tautologically as those factors which make it appear that the marriage should be dissolved. The same two bases apply to legal separations, which under the act will be granted only where the parties agree to separation instead of dissolution.

As a further bar to the fault doctrine, the new law prohibits proof of specific acts of marital misconduct except where they bear on the issue of child custody or where the court finds them necessary to establish the existence of irreconcilable differences, a doubtful exception that may let in by the rear door the ugly testimony that has been painfully dragged out the front.

Actions for marital dissolution will no longer be commenced by the filing of an adversary complaint denominating the parties as "*Jones* vs. *Jones*." The

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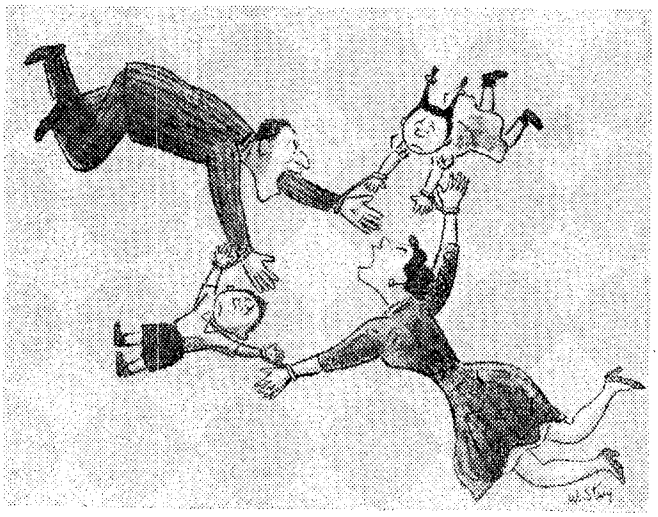
act substitutes a neutral petition, captioned "In re the marriage of ——— and ———," and contains no allegations of specific acts or particular conduct. This is a small part of the totality of reform, but it is important: no one is named as "plaintiff" or "defendant" and neither party will legally "win" a divorce. The existing system of adversary pleading and proof all too often thrusts spouses into needlessly opposed positions, and by forcing the completion of their polarization—no polarization, no divorce—may infect their future relations with each other and with their children.

To guard against "divorce mills," the new law re-



W. Steig, New York Times

tains a residence requirement. In order to procure a decree of dissolution under the act, one of the parties must have resided in California for six months and in the county for three months immediately before filing the petition; the prior law called for a one-year residency in the state.

Along with the elimination of fault as the basis of dissolution is its abolition as a determinant of important consequences of dissolution—the division of property, alimony, support of the former spouse. It is not true, at least under California practice, that the major problems of divorce today involve the granting or withholding of decrees. The courts of California have long since recognized that there is no justification for holding together at law a marriage that is dead in fact. The problems come with respect to the division of property and awards of alimony, and in the resolution of child custody. In matters of property and support, fault until now has been the controlling factor: the bulk of community property—defined in California law as all property acquired after marriage, except that received by gift or by inheritance—was awarded to the "innocent" spouse, when the divorce was awarded on the basis of extreme cruelty, adultery or incurable insanity. When one realizes that 96 per cent of the divorces in California have been granted on the ground of extreme cruelty, and that some 90 per cent of those are uncontested in court (average time for hearing about seven minutes, if counsel strives to speak the litany clearly and not run his words together), one sees why the standard of "fault as a determinant" is utterly bankrupt.

Similarly, alimony under previous law could be awarded only on the basis of a decree of divorce entered *against* the one obliged to pay. It was thus in fact, though supposedly not precisely in theory, a punishment for matrimonial fault. Alimony is normally terminable upon the remarriage of the recipient spouse, or upon the death of either of them. Combined with unrealistic expectations concerning women's occupational and social roles and some misplaced judicial chivalry, these doctrines have led to unjust and unrealistic orders which have in turn produced a whole host of embittered spouses, encouraged vexatious litigation and created a chaos of enforcement.

Under the Family Law Act, community property will be divided equally between the two spouses unless the court finds that one of them has deliberately misappropriated their common assets. With that exception, marital misconduct has no relevance to or bearing on the division of property. However, the parties are free to divide the property unequally if they so agree.

In awarding alimony, the court is required to consider the needs and circumstances of the parties, the duration of the marriage and the ability of the supported spouse to engage in gainful employment without interfering with the interests of children in her or his custody. The new provisions should provide some curb to aberrational judgments which have given the greater portion of the property to the plaintiff wife, added excessive amounts of alimony on top of that, and thus given the wife a perpetual lien on the husband's future, while encouraging her to lie fallow.

On that most sensitive of issues, child custody, the Family Law Act presents a mixed bag of solutions which reflect an accommodation between the classic tensions of the interests of the child and the interests of the parent. When the contest is between parents, the award of custody is to be governed by the "best interests of the child," but the new law carries on the express favor of the old toward the mother when the child is of tender years. When the contest is between a parent and a non-parent, a system of preferences is created. This ranking prefers the home in which the child has been living in a "stable and wholesome" environment, but allows an award to a non-parent only upon a finding that a parental award would be detrimental to the child. Previous law allowed the giving of custody to a non-parent only if the parent were proven unfit, an excessively harsh and stigmatizing requirement. There may be scant difference between proof of unfitness and a showing



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of detriment to the child, but as one of the country's leading authorities in family law, Prof. Herma Hill Kay of the University of California has observed, the change will at least be helpful to the extent that it focuses attention on the quality of the relationship between parent and child, rather than on the personal vices of the parent.

On several points, the new law is notable for what it did not accomplish. Disregarding the recommendations of every study since the Assembly began inquiry into the problems of divorce reform in 1964, that Family Law Act preserves an "interlocutory period," a time span (shortened from one year to six months) between the rendition of the first decree of dissolution and the final judgment. The interlocutory period rarely if ever lives up to its derivative name and purpose: any "speaking between" is likely to become increasingly rancorous, if carried on at all. Few would dispute, I think, the need for some "cooling-off" period between a spouse's decision to seek dissolution and the granting of judgment, as a guard against hasty and ill-conceived actions. But this should come before, not after, the judicial intervention that severs the union.

Much more important, the new act did not implement the recommendations of the Governor's Commission that a family court division be created as a part of the Superior Court in each county of the state. This structure would have centralized family cases, which are now often spread over many calendars. It would have been equipped with a professional staff of marriage counselors to render counseling services to such parties as wished to use them on a purely voluntary basis, and investigative services to the court in child custody matters. Thirteen of the state's fifty-eight counties now have conciliation courts which provide counseling, but their efforts are largely limited to reconciliation counseling, aimed at keeping marriages together. The commission's proposal envisioned extending this to provide aid to people for whom dissolution was inevitable, but who wished help in adjusting themselves to their new roles and relationships. For a variety of reasons—among them cost, concern that a family court structure would disrupt existing systems of court calendaring and perhaps a fear that "social work" would dilute "hard legal process"—the act contents itself with a provision empowering the Judicial Council to construct rules of practice. The rules may effect some consolidation of family cases, but can hardly expand the services that could have been provided.

On balance, however, the new law emerges as a positive step toward conforming court proceedings to real needs. It makes fundamental and far-reaching changes in the divorce process and—one hopes—in the effects of that process as well. The passage of the Family Law Act is instructive in another way. An effort of great complexity, it is the product of some compromise, as any legislation in a democratic society must be, and it mirrors more clearly than most the ambivalence that society feels about the institutions of marriage and the family. For at the same time that it embraces the notion that a marriage should be judicially dissolved only upon proof of its breakdown, the new law may reserve to the court the final power to decide that question, to deny that there is a breakdown of the particular marriage despite an obvious and even vehement agreement of both spouses to the contrary. Society has a legitimate and strong interest in promoting family stability and in overseeing care for and disposition of the children of riven marriages; the vice of purely consensual divorce upon demand is that it does not afford the opportunity for society to protect those proper interests. But allowing the possibility that the law may hold together a marriage which is in fact defunct does not serve them either.

In striking down within the last four years state laws banning miscegenous marriages and the dissemination of contraceptives, the Supreme Court of the United States has made it perfectly clear that marriage involves rights to privacy of an unparalleled order. Only where the state's interest is both clear and compellingly connected to the prevention of an identifiable harm (such as jeopardy to children) should its intervention be brooked. But somehow we are not quite at the point of candidly recognizing that the interests of society are best served by facilitating—not just suffering—the dissolution of a marriage that is in fact dead. Though we aren't there yet, California's new Family Law Act is a productive start. □

## LETTERS *(Continued from page 2)*

some wars are justifiable." He also stated: "The doctrine which Tolstoy preached with great persuasive force, that the holders of power could be morally regenerated if met by non-resistance, was obviously untrue in Germany after 1933. Clearly Tolstoy was right only when the holders of power were not ruthless beyond a point, and clearly the Nazis went beyond this point." . . . Today the Vietnamese would certainly believe that the Americans have been "ruthless beyond a point"; the Biafrans believe that the Nigerians backed by the British have been likewise. When will we ever learn?

*Ronald V. Sampson*

### no stamp for hippies

*Hollywood, Calif.*

Dear Sirs: The House Agricultural Committee has voted to withhold food stamps from "hippies and students who get parental support and from nonworking adults, except mothers.". . .

Strangely though, our watchdogs of the national purse strings have *not* voted to withhold those huge sums being ladled out to wealthy farm owners for not growing things. This non-productive (and certainly not hungry) segment of our population, it turns out, will continue to receive its dole. . . .

*Harry Cimring*



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# BOOKS & THE ARTS

## The Warriors and the People

REBELLION AND REPRESSION. *By Tom Hayden. World Publishing. 186 pp. $4.95. Paper $1.95.*

**PETER CLECAK**
*Mr. Clecak teaches English and American Culture at the University of California (Irvine), and is at work on a book on contemporary American social criticism.*

As the stultifying fifties drew to a close, a new generation of radicals promised to chart fresh directions in American politics. Filled with a sense of urgency, they recorded their broad aims in the Port Huron statement, a declaration of man's unrealized potentialities which could flourish in a decent social context. They asserted that man was "infinitely precious and possessed of unfulfilled capacities for reason, freedom and love." And they recognized the need for a radical politics to bring about a new society, a "democracy of individual participation, governed by two central aims: that the individual share in those social decisions determining the quality and direction of life; that society be organized to encourage independence in men and provide the media for their common participation."

Idealistic, bright and energetic, these young people revived the confidence of weary men on the Left. Of course, the young radicals had limitations. They were apparently innocent of the disastrous potentialities of moral vision untempered by political reality. But their inseparable strengths and weaknesses were those of youth. Vision would be modified by experience, it was supposed. What counted was their idealism and enormous energy. As C. Wright Mills declared in 1960: "Let the old men ask sourly, 'Out of Apathy—into what?' The Age of Complacency is ending. Let the old women complain sourly about 'the end of ideology.' We are beginning to move again."

After a decade of movement, however, the question which Mills brushed aside seems worth asking once again. For the hopes of a generation of radicals have soured and their visions have taken on new, often disturbing shapes.

Tom Hayden's brief public career covers the turbulent period of the 1960s, highlighting its exaggerated hopes and its disillusionments. At 31, he embodies the short history of the New Left. The principal author of the Port Huron statement in 1962, Hayden is now one of the Chicago 8, a victim of the Administration's drive to control dissent, to re-establish "law and order." He has joined a small, embattled minority as thoroughly disenchanted with the nonrevolutionary Left as it is with every other segment of the Establishment. The dramatic shifts in Hayden's social vision, political perspective, and moral stance are all recorded in *Rebellion and Repression.*

The book itself is disappointing. It consists of no more than a brief introduction and the lengthy transcripts of Hayden's testimony before two groups—the National Commission on Violence and the House Internal Security Committee (the successor to HUAC). The question-and-answer format of the investigatory bodies, in addition to the narrow motives and intellectual range of most of the interrogators, imposes severe restrictions on the author. The important and the trivial run together. Serious problems cannot be discussed at length. The witness and the committee members work at cross-purposes, confronting one another across conflicting views of the world. Hence, long stretches of the book are fragmentary, dull and inconclusive.

However, in spite of its flabby structure and dreary surface, the book manages to record the sad effects of the 1960s on one of its representative new radicals. In an extended statement before the Commission on Violence, Hayden summarizes the defeats and disappointments of a decade which turned many of the nonviolent radicals into militant revolutionaries. He recounts what is by now a familiar pattern of high expectations leveled by the narrow spectrum of American politics. Hayden mentions his early hopes for a new turn in American political life after the election of Kennedy in 1960: "for many of us, the Peace Corps represented an alternative symbolically, a way out of the Cold War: and at the same time, an alternative to the rat-race careers that most young people faced unhappily." Then the Peace Corps revealed itself as another instrument of American foreign policy, a glove covering the mailed fist. A similar pattern unfolded in the civil rights struggles. Hayden testifies that the students "went South with a confidence that the conscience of the United States of America was on our side" only to discover a nationwide racism beneath the thin crust of pious rhetoric.

Vietnam added an international "dimension to the violence and racism we were already seeing at home." Participation in the anti-war movement over a five-year stretch convinced many radicals that the American political system was rigged in favor of dominant economic and military interests. The students had no voice in the war that many of them were expected to fight. Toward the end of the sixties, then, the "student movement, the anti-war movement, was becoming more radical basically because of its experience in this society. From a position of expecting idealistically that authorities would listen to us, we were moving towards questioning the legitimacy of the authority." By October 1967, protest had turned into resistance. Of course, there were signs of hope even during this period—principally the McCarthy and Kennedy campaigns. But the brief interludes of optimism once shattered only confirmed the radicals' growing disillusionment. As Hayden puts it: "Kennedy's death convinced young people that America as a whole society is irrational and off its bearings. McCarthy's defeat convinced young people that the political machinery is corrupt and insensitive, unrepresentative, and probably impossible to reform."

This highly selective interpretation of the history of the New Left serves to explain and justify Hayden's current view that resistance must be accelerated into limited rebellion, into a higher level of militancy. Since "repression is inevitable," rebellion becomes the only political strategy consistent with the aim of establishing a decent society. Hence, the movement must emphasize that "the government is taking *political prisoners*, and reject the rulers' definition that we are lawbreakers." It must struggle within the courts and at the same time mount a "total attack on the courts," which are "just another part of this rigged apparatus." And finally, the movement must internationalize its revolutionary efforts: "For the dual purpose of fighting repression and making total change, we must work together with those who are fighting to remove American capitalists and imperialists from their soil." All other forms of political activity amount to shadowboxing.

Thus, Hayden's original aim of finding



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effective political forms to fit his ambitious dreams of a new society has given way to militarism with a concomitant definition of reality: "Whether repression works depends basically on our spirit. If we are cautious or paranoid, if we focus only on our own defense and forget the issues that made us originally rebel, our feelings will spread and weaken the morale of the people. If we keep a fighting spirit, and define the issues over and over, the people will support us as their warriors." This change in social vision contains its own ironic inner logic. The need to retain the visionary goals of the Port Huron statement has driven Hayden to embrace increasingly desperate political means. The contracted intellectual and political perspectives are a function of ideals applied to resistant social reality.

Though still a shrewd political tactician, Hayden has lost his capacity to place tactical elements into a comprehensive strategy. Reduction of the social landscape to a caricature of rebellion versus repression allows Hayden to cast himself as a romantic "warrior" whom "the people" will eventually follow. But he can no longer assess the "people" with even a faint degree of accuracy, as the confused justification of the book makes painfully clear. Although Hayden's decision to testify before the House Internal Security Committee in order to avoid a "contempt of Congress" indictment is certainly understandable, his reasons for appearing before the Commission on Violence seem disingenuous. Failure to accept the invitation, Hayden argues, would "imply that revolutionaries are intransigent, opposed to 'dialogue,' and have something to hide. The problem, then, was to use their own forum to ridicule their authority, defy their stereotypes, and present a meaningful case to the American people."

The logical lapse in this passage may merely serve the higher purposes of irony (though Hayden generally appears humorless). Still, the primary motives for the book imply a romantic political perspective. For in addition to ridiculing the committee's authority, Hayden hopes to educate the American public by publishing the transcripts: "The public is the final jury in this trial and the public does not know what to think. As Eldridge Cleaver says, 'The basic problem in this country today is political confusion. People don't know whether to be afraid of the right or the left.' "

After completing the transcripts, I suspect that the vast majority of readers will still not know what to think or whom to fear. There is scant evidence of the dialogue that Hayden promises. For the most part, he is confined to the dismal level of his inquisitors. If his defense of the movement's oppositional life styles reassures the initiated, it surely will move no one else. Consider the concluding passage of the book. Congressman Watson reads from a Yippie flier:

> Disobey your parents. Burn your money. You know life is a dream, and all our institutions are manmade illusions, effective because you take the dream of reality. Break down the family, church, nature, city, economy, turn life into an art form, and theater of the soul, and a theater of the future. The revolutionary is only an artist. What is needed is a generation of people who are freaky, crazy, irrational, sexy, angry, irreligious, childish, and mad. People who burn draft cards, burn high school and college degrees, people who say "to hell with your goals." People who redefine the normal, people who break with the status-royal-title-consumer game, people who have nothing material to lose but their flesh, and finally, the white youth of America have more in common with Indians plundered than they do with their own parents. Burn your houses down, and you will be free.

The rattled Congressman asks whether this, in Hayden's judgment, "is the way to have a better America." The reply: "I think that beautiful sentiments are expressed in that statement, and I wish that you could understand them, Mr. Watson." "Fine," Watson concludes, "that wraps it up real well." But in whose favor? The tedious rhetorical joust ends inconclusively. Perhaps Hayden's endorsement of the "beautiful sentiments" is a put-on? But then who is educated? Is this what Hayden means by making "a meaningful case to the American people"?

Hayden's testimony falls into a rhetorical void. Romantic fantasies of "the warriors" and "the people" substitute for political analysis. In modern America, the decision to become a revolutionary warrior finally represents a submission to personal frustration rather than an extension of the search for a politics of the Left. Politics becomes psychodrama: witness the recent histrionics of the Weathermen in Chicago and Andrew Kopkind's observation that "we all thought in the cell block that night that simply not to fear fighting is a kind of winning" (*Hard Times*, October 29, 1969). Personal catharsis becomes hopelessly entangled with political action—and with political disaster.

Though somewhat arrogant, the original framers of the Port Huron statement were rhetorically, and even morally persuasive. The moral stance of Hayden before the investigative bodies, however, reveals a loss of moral sensitivity, an inability to recognize three-dimensional situations. Positing a world of criminals and victims, Hayden assumes the right to place everyone in one category or another. While defending the minimal violence of the movement he describes two incidents in Chicago which occurred at about the same time. Shortly before the Democratic convention a group of electrical workers "shot down the electrical cables leading to the Nike site on the shore of Lake Michigan." During the convention, some of the protesters threw bags of urine at the police. Hayden asserts that the electrical workers did "something more violent than any students at Chicago were accused of doing; because shooting down Nike cables is quite different from throwing a bag of urine at a policeman." It *is* quite different—it is not as violent. For there is a difference, although Hayden does not recognize it, between violence against property and violence against people. That kind of moral insensitivity divides the Left against itself and insulates it from larger constituencies.

The American economic and social order *is* essentially irrational—unspeakably so. Economically, the system generates more surplus than it can profitably and usefully absorb. Yet it fails to meet the elemental needs of one-third of its people while engaging the others in a frantic cycle of excess work and excess consumption. Politically, it generates impotence, ignorance, and mediocrity among leaders and followers. Socially and psychologically, the American system divides men against one another and against themselves. It is, by and large, a cultural disaster. On a global scale, it exploits large numbers of people in Asia, Africa and Latin America. Though capable of satisfying men's needs on a historically unprecedented scale, America wastes and destroys human resources and minimizes the hopes of men everywhere for a more decent life. No wonder, then, that American capitalist imperialism evokes frustration, anger, even rage in its critics.

Hayden is doubtless correct in arguing that manipulation of public opinion, discrediting of dissent and police repression will be accelerated in the 1970s. Nixon, Agnew, Laird and Mitchell are solidly cast—and capable of staging a national and perhaps even a global nightmare. Moreover, as Hayden points out, the actual and potential violence of the American system dwarfs the minimal violence of the movement. But that is precisely the point. The movement is limited on quite pragmatic grounds. Only a romantic, metapolitical self-image can sustain visions of revolutionary victory in corporate America. True, the repression is real, but its scope, intensity and effectiveness in the near future are still



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open questions. Part of the answer lies in the vision and strategy of the New Left. By regarding repression as "inevitable," Hayden may help to increase its intensity. He reasons that since repression cannot be avoided, it ought to be pressed into the service of its opposite—rebellion. But in the absence of any evidence that the forces of rebellion will significantly increase, the argument for irritating the dialectic breaks down.

By confusing frustration and desire with political strategy, then, Hayden (and much of the New Left as well) not only confines himself to irrelevance but endangers others on the Left. His simplistic view blinds him to the reality of contemporary American politics. An anti-capitalist, anti-imperialist analysis does not call for a militant revolutionary opposition in North America. Rather, it calls for a much subtler theoretical and political opposition. We ought to face the fact that the American economic and social order is not going to be "thoroughly transformed" in the image of the New Left. Indeed, in the 1970s, it will probably shift more to the right—toward a kind of military authoritarianism. At best, monopoly capitalism may move in the direction of Left-liberal reforms, retaining its essential characteristics while softening some of its harsher domestic features. In foreign policy, it may replace an indiscriminate imperialism with a more selective imperialism.

This is not a cheerful perspective. It may even turn out to be an illusory one. But it recognizes that a small, divided Left is in no position to call the shots. The central and modest aim of the Left must be to survive and perhaps learn from the vast majority of people it effectively excludes from its ranks. In the most elementary sense, survival entails the preservation and strengthening of civil rights and liberties which can no longer be taken for granted. Hayden too cavalierly dismisses the judicial system as a fraud. Law *does* "serve power," as he asserts. It also serves people from time to time, including those on the Left. Survival also requires rationality: no serious politics of the Left will emerge as long as the movement accepts the essential features and modes of mass culture. The substitution of slogans for discriminating thought may sell soap chips. It does not equip men to understand a system they wish to change. Moreover, survival in this period requires that the illusions of childhood, the dreams of "total change," be put away: in this period, they are corrupting. These, I think, are the minimal conditions—in fact, the preconditions—for the survival of the American Left in the 1970s. Later on, there may be partial victories.

In *Rebellion and Repression*, Hayden misses an opportunity to offer a precise critique of the bleak political trends in America. The book is mutilated by oversimplification, intellectual rigidity, shrillness and romantic posture. It is a failure —perhaps even a representative failure. But the faults—far more than the explicit arguments—indict America, for they show us what we have become: a society that squanders much of its most promising talent. □

# 'A Doctor in His Book'

MILTON: A Biography. *By William Riley Parker. Oxford University Press. 2 Vols. 1,489 pp. $35.*

**JOHN N. MORRIS**
*Mr. Morris is the author of* Versions of the Self: Studies in English Autobiography *(Basic Books). A volume of his poems is to be published by Atheneum this year. He teaches 18th-century English literature at Washington University.*

"He would be cheerful even in his gout-fits, and sing." John Aubrey's Milton, determinedly merry, is not everyone's. Indeed, it sometimes seems that almost the only persons who have ever liked Milton were those who knew him or, like Aubrey, knew a good deal about him. For many of the rest of us he appears to have lived only to excite and gratify our appetite for outrage.

Of this state of affairs his most recent biographer is perfectly aware. "Let me say at the outset that I like Milton as a person," the late Prof. William Riley Parker announces in the first sentence of his two volumes. Thus tactfully balancing defensiveness against defiance, he acknowledges that the business of any biographer of the poet is to justify Milton's ways. Parker's 666 pages of narrative and 823 of apparatus are intended to put us so thoroughly in possession of the detail of Milton's life as to disarm criticism. To the confident judgments of ignorance he opposes his certainty—and it becomes the reader's—that matters are more complicated than had been supposed.

For good and ill, this new life of Milton, like some other modern scholarly lives of the poets, is not so much biography as expert testimony. Here is argument by accumulation. The weight of the evidence is what matters, not its force and point. Such a work is easy

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to condemn. It trusts the power and authority of brute fact to stun us into silent acquiescence in whatever interpretation of events the author wishes to put forward. The man has been at his task for thirty years and more. How can we ever know enough to argue with him?

One's natural objections to such attempts at intimidation, one's distaste for the scholar as bully, make more sense, it seems to me, than do those easy cavils against minute scholarship as such that some are fond of voicing. Though it is true that Professor Parker was for years the editor of the *Publications of the Modern Language Association*, his *Milton* is a real book, in some respects a model of its rather special kind.

In the first place it tells a story—the story of the growth of a poet's mind. Parker provides a convincing account of the passage of a high-principled, naive young man through years of private and public distress, loss, disappointment, achievement and humiliation, to a wise and serene old age. In the sense that it issued at last in dignity, this is a life that any man, certain of some measure of Milton's pain but unsure of his consolations, might wish for himself and about which it might do him good to read. Allowing the fortuitous, the conditioned elements in the career their full weight, Parker modifies one's sense of Milton as the creature of his own pure will and thereby renders him more attractive and more admirable than that figure so full of intention, so justly confident of his powers and so fully in command of them that sometimes seems to inhabit his works. Under the tutelage of experience Milton became a man who could change his mind without changing his principles.

The growth of that mind to the full maturity in which it produced the great last works was not, as Parker makes clear, a merely intellectual process. The famous episode of his first marriage, for instance, is here described with great tact; Parker's account of it feels right, as Robert Graves's, say, does not. Having accomplished this difficult act of biographical understanding, Parker is in a position to articulate the connection between a private disaster and a new stage in Milton's mental progress. That connection, of course, is the divorce tracts, which are here seen to be not merely a response to disappointment but the occasion on which the promptings of pain assist Milton to complicate, deepen and refine his notion of freedom. Parker's account of this passage in Milton's life is a little parable of how, in the intercourse of intelligence with feeling, ideas are conceived.

It is not to be expected that a biographer's handling of every episode in a life should rise to so high an imaginative level. Parker manages it remarkably often—as in his chapters on Milton's political writings and public service, in which the poet stands forth, nobly absurd, as a kind of 17th-century Norman Mailer. But Parker's more usual virtue is of another sort—the sort proper to scholarship. "His birthplace was almost certainly a bedroom on the second floor of a tenement called the Spread Eagle, in a large house called the White Bear, on the east side of Bread Street in London, a little south of Cheapside."

With what pleasure Parker must have written that sentence! Whole paragraphs of annotation modestly buried in the second volume bolster the confidence with which he deploys his prepositional phrases. As a piece of English prose the sentence may not long endure in memory; but as we read it—and the thousands like it in this book—we enjoy the unusual pleasure of being in the presence of someone who knows something and knows it as clearly and distinctly as this class of the objects of knowledge is ever likely to be known. The question of whether the precise place of Milton's birth is a fact worth knowing does not arise, or not right away. It is the knowing that matters, not the known; the act, not the object. The essential quality of the act is its perfect disinterestedness.

The simplicity of this relationship between a mind and the object of its attention is one ground of the dignity of scholarship. Considered as activity, scholarly investigations are instrumental to no end, not even (except secondarily) the writing of books. In a sense, pure scholarship is, as its enemies keep insisting, perfectly useless; and therein lies its value. Like some kinds of poetry, good literary scholarship is sober play, and its grave innocence reproaches the ulteriority of many other intellectual enterprises.

Most pages of Parker's *Milton* exemplify this sort of virtue. But not all. For years Parker has been notorious among students of Milton for his insistence that *Samson Agonistes*, conventionally regarded as the last of the major poems, was in fact composed or at least begun in the 1640s, well before *Paradise Lost*. He may be right, but the pages in which he argues his case do not convince me. Such rearrangements of history appear often to express the scholar's wholly understandable ambition to justify his thousands of hours of labor by setting straight the record not only in petty detail but in some "important" way. Not content with illuminating the past, he wishes to make "a contribution to knowledge"—one that in its obtrusiveness will guarantee his scholarly fame. Thus the historical scholar, like the astronomer in *Rasselas* whose imagination prevailed upon him to believe that in his careful observations of the heavens he was in fact controlling the movements of planets and the cycles of the days and seasons, may fall into the error of supposing that his authority over the past extends to the revision as well as the recording of it.

But Parker's biography only very occasionally displays such signs of what Dr. Johnson called "the dangerous prevalence of imagination." Parker is, in Milton's phrase, "a doctor in his book, as he ought to be, or else had better be silent." It is a tyrannical work, but it is capable of giving pleasure. □

# Beyond the Pale

THE DOWNTOWN JEWS. *By Ronald Sanders. Harper & Row. 477 pp. $10.*

**MICHAEL T. GILMORE**
*Mr. Gilmore is a teaching fellow in American Studies at Harvard. His articles have appeared in* Midstream *and the* Congress Bi-Weekly.

In 1902, when too many of his countrymen still mouthed the shibboleths of Social Darwinism, Hutchins Hapgood published *The Spirit of the Ghetto*, the first sympathetic account of the lower East Side written by a native American. Endowed with an understanding of human needs and aspirations that eluded apologists for the Gilded Age, he tried to explain to his readers the peculiar fascination of the immigrant community. It was there, he wrote, that young Americans of his generation, repelled by a brutal individualism, were turning in increasing numbers to satisfy their hunger for spiritual unity—a unity he believed existed in Jewish immigrant culture. Calling this the Spirit of the Ghetto, Hapgood invoked it to revitalize America.

His appeal, of course, was more sanguine than realistic. Nor did Hapgood himself fully grasp the complexities of ghetto culture, failing to discern, for example, the importance of socialism as a secularized version of Judaism. Now Ronald Sanders, describing his interest as "ethnic archaeology," has written *The Downtown Jews*, a book which has the virtues of Hapgood's classic without the oversights. It is an immensely readable and provocative re-creation of the lower East Side around the turn of the century.

Concentrating on the career of Abraham Cahan, Sanders sketches in the back-



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ground of the exodus from Eastern Europe, traces the growth and decline of the Yiddish theatre and press, and untangles the personal and political rivalries that shattered the ghetto's surface unanimity. By particular reference to Cahan, he isolates the contradictory attitudes that divided both the ghetto and the individual immigrant. And he examines, finally, the process by which America "Americanizes" its immigrants, a process that helps to account for the failure of Hapgood's appeal.

As Sanders makes clear, Cahan was the one figure who thoroughly dominated ghetto life. Born in 1860 near Vilna, the city Napoleon had called the "Jerusalem of Lithuania," he studied for a time at one of the schools established under Czars Nicholas I and Alexander II for the "Russification" of Jewish youth. Drawn into the revolutionary underground, he was liberated from the parochialism of the Pale of Settlement. His modern outlook enabled him to serve as a mediator between the lower East Side (a kind of American Pale of Settlement) and the country at large.

Once in America, to which he fled soon after the pogroms of 1881, Cahan acquired a reputation for his speeches on socialism, including the first ever delivered here in Yiddish. Within a year he had mastered enough English to begin contributing articles to a variety of American newspapers. His ascent was meteoric, an intellectual's counterpart to the economic success story he depicted in *The Rise of David Levinsky* (1917).

Installed as editor of the *Jewish Daily Forward*, he turned this obscure Yiddish tabloid into a landmark of American journalism, piloting it to a circulation of a quarter of a million. Cahan championed trade unionism against the attacks of anarchists and radical Socialists. He devised features like the popular "A Bintel Brief," a column that printed letters from readers along with the editor's replies. Ironically Cahan himself became an agent of Americanization, for the advice he gave too often pandered to mass taste and diluted Socialist principles in order to boost circulation. The *Forward* ran articles of instruction on everything American, from baseball to the Senate; and if Cahan continued to profess his own mild brand of socialism his readership eventually deserted it for the platitudes of Wilsonian progressivism and the New Deal.

What Cahan left out of the *Forward*, however, he poured into his novels. Acclaimed by William Dean Howells, who saw in Cahan the foremost chronicler of the Jewish quarter, his art burned with the frustrations the smiling public man concealed. The theme closest to his heart, to which he returned again


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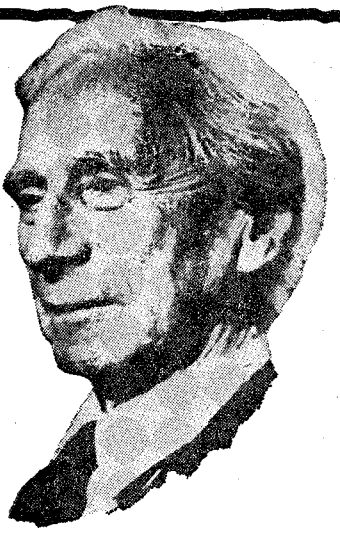

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and again, Sanders has aptly identified as the "embourgeoisement" of the Russian revolutionary spirit on American soil. Like Tocqueville, many of whose insights he shared, Cahan chafed at the tyranny of American consensus. As late as 1917 he could still protest with one of his characters from *The Rise of David Levinsky*: "Russia is a better country than America, anyhow, even if she is oppressed by a Tsar. It's a freer country, too—for the spirit, at least. There is more poetry there, more music, more feeling, even if our people do suffer appalling persecution."

Yet Cahan never wholly endorsed this view. He appeared to believe at times that some flaw in his own character, a flaw akin to Levinsky's greed, had weakened his defenses against the seductions of American life; but he managed to weigh the loss of his Russian spirit against the accomplishments of the Jew in America; and he had the satisfaction of knowing that he personally had done much to ease the plight of his fellow immigrants. "He had . . . written a major novel at last," Sanders notes, "a summary statement in fiction of the Jewish immigrant experience. In this way, at least, he had come to terms with America after all."

Abraham Cahan never wrote fiction again. He settled into the routine of editing the *Forward*, and churned out a nostalgic autobiography in Yiddish that had stretched to five volumes before he finally abandoned it in 1931. The fiery promise of his youth went unfulfilled, in part because of the pressures that impel men like him into the liberal fold. The travesty of legal justice that followed the Haymarket riots was one of these; another, of which Sanders does not make enough, was the Johnson Act of 1924. By cutting off the flow of newcomers to America, this law amounted to a condemnation of the immigrants already here; the widespread aversion to them made its passage possible.

Other pressures came from abroad. The emergence of authoritarianism in Russia, for example, snuffed out social-democratic hopes for the revolution and had the effect of dampening dissent at home. The Yiddish press, so heavily staffed by refugees from Czarist terror, was not long in adding its voice to the national chorus of anti-communism.

Thus the spiritual unity which Hapgood had sought in the ghetto became only a memory to the ghetto dwellers themselves, as they exchanged the ardent socialism of the past for American liberalism. Successfully climbing into the middle and wealthy classes, their offspring have come to rest in the suburbs and the affluent reaches of upper Manhattan. What has remained, Sanders suggests, is the hunger, the same hunger, perhaps, that informs the radicalism of Jewish youth today.

One continues to hope that such radicalism can be adapted to American realities without spiritual loss—to hope, in short, that the national polarization threatening to engulf us will yield to a more benign sense of community than that emerging on the violent Left. But the experience of Abraham Cahan and his contemporaries would seem to indicate otherwise. For surely Sanders is right to have called the last chapter of his engrossing book "The Long Twilight," in implicit reference to the liberal tradition where the immigrants he portrays spent so much of their lives. □


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# 'I Shan't Be Gone Long'

THE POETRY OF ROBERT FROST. *Edited by Edward Connery Latham. Holt, Rinehart & Winston. 607 pp. $10.95.*


**JAMES F. LIGHT**

*Mr. Light is chairman of the English Department of the University of Bridgeport. The author of books on Nathanael West, John W. De Forest and J. D. Salinger, he is currently editing for Garrett Press the Collected Works of De Forest.*


In *The Poetry of Robert Frost*, Edward Connery Latham, the Dartmouth librarian and a friend of Frost until the poet's death in 1963, has prepared with impeccable scholarship a one-volume edition of Frost's eleven volumes of poetry and two short blank-verse plays. The collection ranges in time from *A Boy's Will* (1913) to *In the Clearing* (1962), and includes all those poems that legitimate evidence suggests Frost himself probably would have chosen to document his artistic achievement.

In addition, Mr. Latham has prepared an appendix of bibliographical and textual notes for each of the poems. In these notes, he states, with a minimum of pedantry and a maximum of usefulness, the essential facts pertinent to each poem: the source where it was initially published in an authorized version; all publications in any of the selected or collected editions of Frost's poetry; all textual variations in the authorized printed sources of each poem; and all basic and pertinent textual information beyond these facts (for instance, he reproduces the brief but illuminating glosses in the table of contents of the original edition of *A Boy's Will*).

In time, no doubt, the totality of Frost's work (what he wished to be forgotten as well as what he desired to preserve) will be collected in a scholarly, variorum edition, but until the materials for such volumes are at hand, the present work—a physically handsome specimen of the bookmaker's art—should serve all the essential needs of both general and scholarly readers.

In reading the poems anew, one finds as fresh as ever the things, so permeated with Emersonian romanticism, for which Frost has been admired: his focus on ordinary New England folk doing simple tasks in pastoral settings; the use of natural facts and events, as in "After Apple Picking," to suggest symbolic spiritual possibilities; and the sturdy Christian faith which, as in "Reluctance," defies the "treason" of either bowing to "the drift of things" or yielding "with a grace to reason."

The natural speaking voice of which Frost was so fond is emphasized by the placement of "The Pasture"—"I shan't be gone long—you come too"—as the prefatory poem to the entire collection. Similarly characteristic are his sly wit,




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as in "New Hampshire," which indicts cities and commercialism while praising a state which is luckily able to keep its purity by producing a variety of "specimens" but nothing in salable quantities ("One each of everything as in a showcase/ Which naturally she doesn't care to sell"); the dramatic narratives, as in "The Death of the Hired Man," in which the psychological revelation of character and theme is illuminated in memorable images and dialogue ("Home is the place where, when you have to go there/ They have to take you in"); and the rugged self-reliance which reaches its heights in the 1930s in such satiric poems as "Departmental" and such Socratic political dialogues as "Build Soil"—in which poems Frost manifests his distrust of compartmentalized emotions and professions, his contempt for mass political activity ("keep off each other and keep each other off. . . ./ I bid you to a one-man revolution—").

In his speech made on the ritual celebration of Frost's 85th birthday, Lionel Trilling claimed that Frost was a "terrifying poet" who depicted a "manifest America" that was "pastoral," while exposing an "actual America" that was "tragic." That somberness becomes plain with Frost's second volume, *North of Boston*, which W. G. O'Donnell, long before Trilling, called "Frost's tragic discovery." Frost dramatized, in such poems as "Home Burial," "The Fear" and "A Servant to Servants," a world made up in good part of taciturn, lonely, frightened and repressed people who live pathetic lives of total alienation. In *North of Boston* Frost pondered the natural facts of change, decay and rot as challenging man's dream of an ultimate world of heavenly changelessness. Though he clung to his religious optimism, he did consider the possibility that change was itself the ultimate all and all. That nightmare, obsessively recurrent in Frost, is memorably fixed in "The Wood Pile," where Frost compares his fear that ours is a God-forgotten world filled with "The slow smokeless burning of decay" to the "little fear" of a bird who is unnecessarily frightened by the speaker in the poem. Though the fears of both the bird and the man are implied to be shallow ones, the nightmare exists no less meaningfully.

The somberness, though never constant, grows darker in its expression over the years. In "Acquainted with the Night," from the collection *West-Running Brook* (1928), Frost directs those critics who have seen only his brighter side to look a little deeper, to see the horror of the city as he has seen it, to hear the violence he has heard, to feel the guilt and loneliness he has known, to confront the horror of a relativistic universe where the moon

*. . . at an unearthly height,*
*One luminary clock against the sky*

*Proclaimed the time was neither wrong nor right.*
*I have been one acquainted with the night.*

In "Desert Places," from *A Further Range* (1936), he watches the whiteness and the blankness of a lonely, snow-covered landscape; but the emptiness revealed by that "benighted snow" does not terrify him, or so he says, because "I have it in me so much nearer home/ To scare myself with my own desert places." From the same poetic collection, Frost depicts in "Design" a tableau of a white flower, a dead moth, and a "dimpled spider," and that image of death and blight leads him to invert the theological argument for a creator, the argument from design, to a question:

*What brought the kindred spider to that height,*
*Then steered the white moth thither in the night?*
*What but design of darkness to appall?—*
*If design govern in a thing so small.*

Even in his dialogue between Job and God entitled *A Masque of Reason* (1945), Frost provided little comfort, though considerable wit. The justifications that God gives for having tormented Job—among them that He was showing off for the devil—are equivocations; and Job's annoyance, like man's, is plain in Job's complaint:

*You could end this by simply coming out*
*And saying plainly and unequivocally*
*Whether there's any part of man immortal.*
*Yet you don't speak.*

To which, in her practical way, Job's wife adds: "You won't get any answers out of God."

God's silence in the face of man's need to know is an irreconcilable tension in Frost's work. It is phrased in his two-line poem from *A Witness Tree* (1942), "We dance round in a ring and suppose,/ But the Secret sits in the middle and knows." Prof. Lawrance Thompson's admirable biography *Robert Frost: The Early Years* tells of how this tension troubled Frost personally: as both child


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and man he was full of doubts and fears. "The Armful" implies the constant difficulty that Frost had in keeping bundles balanced in his arms and, by extension, in retaining his psychological balance, in reconciling opposites, in fulfilling his conception of himself, expressed in "New Hampshire," as "a good Greek" following the rule of the Golden Mean. Yet if there is any central unity to the poetry of Frost it is exactly this compulsion toward balancing opposites, toward contrasting thesis with antithesis in the search for a satisfactory synthesis.

Among the most common of these dramatic tensions are those between fact and imagination (as in "The Star Splitter" and "Birches"); between the masculine and feminine voices and temperaments (as in "The Death of the Hired Man" and "West-Running Brook"); between men as brothers and as strangers (as in "The Tuft of Flowers"); between change, with its corollary of religious doubt, and permanence, with its corollary of Christian faith (as in "The Black Cottage"); between puritanism and sensualism (or "prude" versus "puke" as Frost expresses the contrast in "New Hampshire"); between socialism and individualism (as in "Build Soil"); between man-made walls and nature's (or is it God's?) constant destruction of walls (as in "Mending Wall"); between democratic brotherhood and the hypocritical pretense of democracy (as in that singular poem, "A Hundred Collars," the source of which may be the initial suspicions that the "Christian" Ishmael has for the barbarian Queequeg in *Moby Dick*); between the urge toward perfection, the laboriousness of gaining it, and the human willingness, therefore, to settle for imperfection (as in that poem "The Grindstone" which seems to have its source, remarkably enough for Frost, in Benjamin Franklin, who was willing to settle for a "speckled conscience" because a perfectly shiny one was so hard to attain); between—well, innumerable other contrasts.

In no poem, perhaps, is Frost's attempt to reconcile tensions more perfectly realized than in "Two Tramps in Mud Time." Written during the thirties, the poem dramatizes the conflict between the speaker's social conscience and his personal desires. When he is interrupted in chopping wood by two "tramps" who desire to do his work "for pay," he feels their hostile stares, he accepts their ability to handle an ax better than he can do, and he grants the logic (based on need rather than love) of their unstated argument. Nevertheless, he decides to continue chopping his own wood, and he justifies doing so by a proposition that exemplifies a code of life:

*But yield who will to their separation,*
*My object in living is to unite*
*My avocation and my vocation*
*As my two eyes make one in sight.*
*Only where love and need are one,*
*And the work is play for mortal stakes,*
*Is the deed ever really done*
*For Heaven and the future's sakes.*

It is this endeavor to fuse opposites, to make a holy marriage by something approaching transcendent logic, that is at the heart of Frost's work and that makes for the evolutionary quality of individual poems—a poetic tactic that Frost implied when he stated that a true poem, like love itself, "begins in delight and ends in wisdom. . . . It begins in delight, it inclines to the impulse, it assumes direction with the first line laid down, it runs a course of lucky events, and ends in a clarification of life—not necessarily a great clarification, such as sects and cults are founded on, but in a momentary stay against confusion."

Such a statement of the joys and purposes of poetry is a modest one—Milton, Whitman and Yeats, among others, would have claimed higher goals—but they are the kinds of aims one might expect from a Yankee mystic (born in San Francisco) who distrusted absolutes (but firmly believed that "there are roughly zones"), and yet clung stubbornly to the knowledge, felt in his bones, that art did matter and even the hope of heaven was not folly.

In an age which, Frost felt, "ran wild in the quest of the new," he settled for the old ways to be new, and, paradoxically, his work today seems fresher than that of those poets who wrote without punctuation or capital letters or metric frame, without coherence or consistency, without content or feeling. It is good to have *The Poetry of Robert Frost* to remind us of the permanence and the greatness of his poetic achievement. □

# FILMS

## ROBERT HATCH

The best Western I have seen in years is *Tell Them Willie Boy Is Here*, directed by Abraham Polonsky from a script he based on a novel by Harry Lawton. The picture abounds in the pleasure of its form: desert scenery, frontier types, a sustained chase and a tense stalking match, great horsemanship and not one, but two pairs of star-crossed lovers. But what gives the film a dramatic stature overshadowing the most adroit of horse operas, is that it has got its values right.

The picture, based I am told on a true incident, occurs at the turn of the century, when the Indian was being transformed in the white man's eyes from the most exciting of big game to the most despised of minorities (he lacked even the economic value of the Negro). It opens, as so many memorable adventure movies have opened, with a man dropping off a train on a remote section of the track. That is Willie Boy, an untamed Indian returning to the reservation. And that, without going into the plot, which I would rather not do, is an adequate summary of the picture. The very look of Willie, the way he walks, the way he leans against a wall, is enough to set itching the trigger fingers of the last of the Indian hunters. And the new breed of Westerners, those merchants and traders who think they have solved the Indian problem, are as much dumfounded as they are bruised by the consequences of underestimating Willie.



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His effect on the other Indians is enigmatic; a good deal of the picture takes place in the eyes of the tame braves who ride posse in pursuit of Willie. His girl's father will not accept him as a suitor by Indian law or by white man's law; to the tribe he is a birthright they have renounced; an ancient glory and a present reproach. There is no place for Willie.

I should emphasize that if there is any moralizing in the above, it is mine, not Polonsky's. He has a tale of high adventure to tell and he goes about it with the extrovert tools of his trade. Relationships are established on the spot, with conventional gestures and the minimum of dialogue; suspense is built by the conventional cutting back and forth from hunters to prey. We have all been raised on the belief that the Western is Hollywood's greatest contribution to popular entertainment, and Polonsky trusts that assumption enough not to hedge his drama with sophistication.

The cast is splendid, particularly Robert Blake as Willie, and Robert Redford as the sheriff who knows that hunting Indians is no longer a vocation. Susan Clark is the reservation agent, doctor, teacher and reluctant mistress of the sheriff, a kind of Katharine Hepburn girl, whom she plays with personal charm and enough plausibility to keep the plot rolling. Katharine Ross, as Willie's bride by abduction, is lovely and obviously worth the gamble he takes, but the squaw role is inevitably recessive. The best thing about the cast as a whole is that it looks as though it had never heard of Paladin. It is onto a real story and plays it to the hilt.

*Willie Boy* is a personal victory for Mr. Polonsky, though that may taste a little bitter in his mouth. He made his first picture—*Force of Evil*, with John Garfield—in 1948; this is his second, more than twenty years later. That is what the black list did to him.

If other people were not so enthusiastic about Hitchcock's *Topaz*, I might not be so cold to it. It is "all Hitchcock," they say, and I say that's the trouble. All Hitchcock and trundled out once more with another coat of varnish. The small touches are superb—look out for that crutch; it may be loaded!—and the main action has all the verisimilitude of an animated window display.

Hitchcock is reputed to be cynical about human motives and pessimistic about the consequences of human virtue. He has, perhaps, good reason, but it appears to have led him into a disdain for his craft that I find deplorable. He will tax himself to create the little effects he likes so much (a fleeting glimpse of Castro is a bit of film magic), but he is willing to accept wooden performances from principals whose only talent is to look like yesterday's stars, and who are condemned to speak lines that numb you into apathy. A scene on an upper floor of the Hotel Theresa in Harlem is meticulously rehearsed and embellished with dozens of fleeting impressions to give an exact feeling of the Cuban nationalists' extemporizing with power, but the accents of the actors who carry the plot come and go like patches of smog.

The film is based on Leon Uris' novel, which is said to be the fictional account of a side melodrama in the days of the missile crisis. It is politically neutral in that it shows the Cubans to be brutal, the Americans to be insensitive and domineering, the French to be gullible and venal, and the Russians (in the person of a high-ranking defector) to be arrogant. But *Topaz* is also neutral, for me at least, in the sense that I never cared which gang would turn out to be the hounds and which the hares. That is a fault in a thriller, and in this case it is odd, for there is never much doubt which party one should be rooting for (the French, at least, are on the side of civilization, here alleged to be threatened by various hands). It happens, I think, because no one seems to be working for himself, or for the audience. They are all working for Mr. Hitchcock. □

# ART

## LAWRENCE ALLOWAY

The Annual Exhibition of Contemporary American Art at the Whitney Museum of American Art, to give it its full name, has often been a mélange in the name of democracy. But the current annual, apart from all the other art shown, samples rather promptly a new trend in painting. The emergent style has to do with illusion, with the happy extension of paintings beyond their physical particulars. If this does not seem so much, let me remind you of the exhibition presented by the Museum of Modern Art in 1968 and called "The Art of the Real," in which it was argued that works of art are facts not symbols, with the result that the meaning of a work was cut back to its sheer physical presence.

For years the flatness of Abstract painting had been a decisive factor and in "The Art of the Real" it became mandatory. However, as Toby Mussman has pointed out, there is a difference between the picture plane of a painting (established spatially by the artist) and the physical surface of the picture. The picture plane has been activated recently

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by departures from flatness within formats that produce the expectation of being flat. This usually takes the form of ironic disjunctions between space-evoking forms grinding against the given flat canvas. In the present show witty paintings by Ron Davis, Frank Stella and William Williams work that way. A subtle example of this flat painting with kinks is by Donald Kauffman, whose painting is crossed by diagonals (like a St. Andrew's cross, joining the four corners) which rupture the logic of flat pattern at the point of intersection, though the effect is held in by muted color.

In place of the monolithic color and the modular repetitions of "The Art of the Real" we are faced, here and there, all through the Whitney, with the deposits of drying liquids and protracted fades of gradated color. The gestural character of the play with materials can be indicated by reference to grids, that stand-by of immediately preceding Abstract art. In Darby Bannard, who was also in "The Art of the Real," there is a grid, but it is awash in soft yellows and rose; and in Gary Bower's painting an underlying grid has had paint ladled all over it. There is probably a link with the Whitney's previous show called "Anti-Illusion: Procedures/Materials" (*The Nation*, June 9). The heaps of leaves and grease by Rafael Ferrer, the scatter of pulverized bits by Barry Le Va, Robert Morris' trailing pieces of felt, seem present in the spatial openness of some of the new Abstract paintings. The release of liquid and the proliferation of organic and accidental forms are analogues of the three-dimensional pieces, though contained within the specific formats of paintings.

Various forms of illusionism, beyond that of *trompe l'oeil*, can be detected. In the paintings of Jack Berthot, Natvar Bhavsar and Harvey Quaytman, for instance, there is a simulation of metallic surfaces. Their paint resembles oxidized sheets—the way that Antonio Tàpies feigned plaster walls. Thus the canvases are amplified in the direction of mass rather than of space; the painting becomes an illusory slab. The reverse of this effect, though equally deceptive, is obtained by Ron Cooper's polyester resin painting and by David Paul's vinyl painting. The former is a solid plane, the latter a sheet pinned on the wall, but both generate warm illusions of internal space. Edwin Ruda's new painting has bars of color on top of another color and it looks as if the paint layers were being squeezed together. Liquidity in David Diao's painting produces soft ripples, as in wet sand at low tide.

Illusionism does two things in Abstract painting: it violates flatness, obviously, and in the way it is being used here it corrodes strongly marked single shapes. These paintings have an undulating and recessive space defined as a field. Illusionism also takes the form in one painterly derivation of Op art, of configurations that are hard to focus on—slow-take paintings. There are several pale and near-white paintings, such as Allan Hacklin's, which come on unobtrusively and then expand into surreptitious color.

In terms of recent American art, the new paintings represent a significant development. On the whole, Abstract Expressionism can be identified as a process art, using the term to mean paintings and sculptures that reveal freely the means by which they are made. The process was especially interpreted in terms of the stresses of the creative act, with the result that the paint tracks, in Pollock or in Willem de Kooning and Franz Kline, were read seismographically. This reading of brushwork and paint trails as the record of the artist's struggle and state of feeling has exercised great influence. For younger painters, one of the ways out of such autographic art was the development of an end-state art (highly finished objects that cover the tracks of making). Hard-edge, literalist art as it deals in large, neat, completed forms can be viewed in this way.

What has now developed, and is clearly seen at the Whitney, is a non-Expressionist process art. It began in the middle sixties with paintings by Jules Olitski (acknowledged) and Alexander Liberman (unacknowledged). The little seen later work of Norman Bluhm (who began as a second-generation Abstract Expressionist) turned to a non-Expressionist painterliness at the same time, in his big paintings of arrested and repeatable spumes of paint. From this beginning painterliness in art has been severed from a constricting reduction to self-expression.

And there is a precedent in Abstract Expressionism itself, the drip paintings of Jackson Pollock, 1948-50. Although his earlier and his last works seem involved in self-expression, in these one can see the big scale favored today and the definition of painting by the amassing of material. Though Pollock is, of course, responsible for the gestural handling of the material there is no invitation to read, say, "Autumn Rhythm" in the Metropolitan, as a diagram of the creative act. On the contrary, it is as much a *made* object as any other major artist's work. The constituents are color and material rather than drawing and composition, but to reduce them to expression-theory is to lose their intended and structural beauty. □

## A DEATH

*Behind the iron gate,*
*As far as the rich man's collie*
*my brother's life pranced.*
*It shook its snowy mantle*
*and shivered in the light*
*like an angel trembling*
*on the temple of a simple joy.*
*I could not touch it*
*nor call it to my side*
*though he came up once,*
*all breathless and excited,*
*to let me touch his collar*
*—and show me mine.*

Robert Burford


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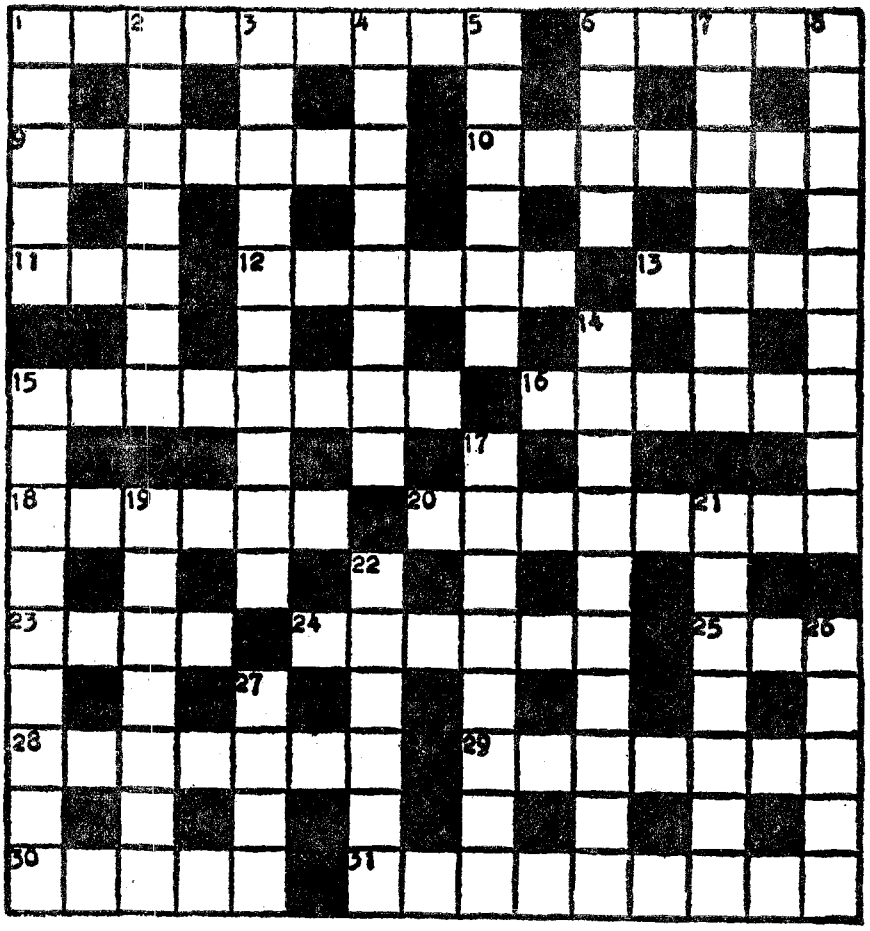

### ACROSS

1 Does it measure the spritely spirit going around? (9)
6 See 6 down
9 Take off weight? Things might not be so black if you do. (7)
10 A calf is unexpectedly obtained for the sake of appearances. (7)
11, 25 and 16 Fad diets fail to make one this healthy! (3,2,1,6)
12 See 24 across
13 One might be rather nervous on it. (4)
15 See 6 down
16 See 11 across
18 What runs overhead around and makes good jumpers? (6)
20 Makes merry, being happy with one's studies? (8)
23 Arc from southern France to Albania. (4)
24 and 12 Lassoed herds, wild, yet properly broken. (6,6)
25 See 11 across
28 Makes mistakes all around and yet still run by some people. (7)
29 Mobile state. (7)
30 and 26 down You might not get a rise out of it, since it implies an improper setting. (5,5)
31 Certainly not a remount station. (9)

### DOWN

1 A flip-flopped dish? (5)
2 Correctly placed after a tip? (7)
3 Tails don't show if you do, but they might go on strike. (10)
4 Probably not thrown by the stable. (8)
5 Searches with intent to steal weapons. (6)
6, 6 across, 15 across and 15 down Does Mr. Sade provide such gossamer material? (4,5,2,6,3,4,2)
7 There's no help being it! (7)
8 Quick to put on a nasty sneer, but they secure lots of things. (9)
14 24 takes time to make it, albeit rather poorly, for this area. (6,4)
17 Proving an exuberant welcome makes a happy worker! (4-4)
19 Such clothing has the sort of appeal that's about right! (7)
21 Searching for them? An atelier should provide issue enough! (7)
22 Alas! It's wrong in the degree of comfort provided by it. (6)
26 See 30 across
27 Not often found in the shape of a cone.

### SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 1327

ACROSS: 1 Checking account; 9 Unbends; 10 Upsurge; 11 Tarred; 12 Et cetera; 14 Oyster farm; 15 Asti; 17 Root; 19 Thermostat; 22 Hatchery; 23 Racine; 25 Nerissa; 26 Orinoco; 27 Experimentation. DOWN: 1 Count your change; 2 Embarks; 3 Kennebec; 4 Nest; 5 Adulterers; 6 Caster; 7 Unreels; 8 The Man in the Moon; 16 Mona Lisa; 18 Outcrop; 20 Tripoli; 21 Chaser; 24 and 13 Coin of the realm.


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